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\* SPARE MINUTE SERIES \*

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Ich liebe dich, mein  
theuer Freund, Cuyler,  
Ich hat dich nicht  
gesehen, aber deine  
geists wird noch leben.

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To

Willie B. Savery

From H. S. Foster

W. Barton

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SPARE MINUTE SERIES.

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# RIGHT TO THE POINT

*FROM THE WRITINGS OF THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.*

SELECTED BY  
MARY STORRS HAYNES

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL. B.  
*of Christ Church, Surrey, London*

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## INTRODUCTION.

PREFACE-WRITING is an art in which I have had no experience; and there is an especial difficulty when the ardors of personal friendship render almost impossible that judicial style that should mark an Introduction to the reader. In this case the author is less vividly before me than the intimate friend who welcomed me to his home and pulpit, on my first visit to America — with whom I have rambled among the ruins of Rome, and the historic scenes of rural England — beside whom I have sat at many religious and reformatory meetings, and sometimes with those who vindicated the cause of American unity and freedom in the dark days of the civil conflict.

No clergyman from the United States has been more cordially received in the pulpits of London or on the platform of Exeter Hall; and none has reached a wider circle of readers in Great Britain during the last five and twenty years. His face greets me every morning in my study, with its honest, eager look, and his letters, so vivid and picturesque, have bridged the Atlantic for me almost every week.

Familiar as Doctor Cuyler may be to his own countrymen as a preacher of the gospel, or the active laborer in moral reform, it is chiefly from the productions of his busy pen that he is known on this side of the sea. These have travelled

wherever our mother-tongue is spoken, and have been translated into several foreign languages. A single journal in London has re-issued many millions of copies of his racy and forcible articles. When I open a copy of the New York *Independent* or *Evangelist*, I always look first to find some article which bears the image and superscription of my friend. He is a master of strong Saxon English; his sentences require no second reading to be understood; he produces a graphic picture by a few touches; old truths are made fresh and attractive by a new dress. The religion taught by prophets and apostles is adapted to our times and presented as the religion for all conditions and classes—for the drawing-room, the nursery and the kitchen, for the college and the workshop, for the Senate chamber and the store, as well as for churches and prayer-meetings. He makes his reader feel that gospel truth is not a mere theory, but a practical reality for the use of every day life.

My witty but devout predecessor, Rev. Roland Hill, said that he liked jaculatory prayer because "it flew up to Heaven before the Devil could get a shot at it." In like manner, Doctor Cuyler's papers are so brief and pithy, so pungent and forceful that their lessons reach the conscience before the eye is weary or is drawn off by less weighty or important matter. His articles in publication, avowedly semi-secular, are a set off to many which appear in professedly religious journals, and yet are scarcely profitable for Sabbath reading. Every production from his pen is brimful of pure gospel; and rarely are they lacking in words of help to the weak and the weary, and in good cheer to the troubled and the suffering.

He has been himself in the college of sorrow, and has been



trained there to become eminently a minister of consolation. The death of a beloved boy, of nearly five years of age, called forth his well-known *Empty Crib*, which Dean Stanley said he had read with tears, to his own family, by his fireside. The subsequent loss of a beautiful and accomplished daughter was the occasion of his writing *God's Light on Dark Clouds* — a volume which is now having a wide circulation in this country. As he has truly said, "There are many of the deepest lessons of life that can only be read by eyes cleansed with tears," and, "if Jesus does not come in visible form to our Bethanys, he oftentimes sends thither his servants and hand-maids with the warm words of condolence."

Such articles as Doctor Cuyler's are too precious to perish with the periodicals they have enriched. Some of them are already gathered into volumes widely popular on this side of the water. A carefully selected volume, like the present one, will be a valuable addition to Christian literature. Few people, nowadays, have the time or the taste for large treatises on theology. We live in a hurry. The daily papers beget a habit of rapid and desultory reading. Leading articles save the trouble of independent research, and portray before us the gist of current topics. God be praised that there are men who can do this in the interests of practical godliness! Sermons abound. Many persons regard a large portion of them as dull to listen to, and still duller in the reading. But Doctor Cuyler's papers are not sermons. There is no tedious exordium, no prolix explanations or ponderous proofs. He is not like a man who detains a friend on the pavement by the button-hole, on a cold day, until he is utterly bored before the speaker comes to the point. Rather does he

accost him as he hurries along, and utters his brief message in tones so clear, kind, and emphatic, that before the man is aware, the speaker has vanished, and yet has left behind truths worthy to be pondered and practised. Without any unseemly intrusion or any waste of time, words have been fitly spoken which are like apples of gold in baskets of silver.

The editor of this volume has made a wide range of selections, but all of them characteristic of their author. In an age of multiplied books, there is still room for another from the pen of my beloved brother; and my fervent prayer is that it may prove to be a new ministry of helpfulness, guidance and cheer to multitudes.

REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL. B.

CHRIST CHURCH, *Westminster Bridge Road,*

*London, January, 1883.*

## THEODORE LEDYARD CUYLER.

**T**HEODORE LEDYARD CUYLER was born at Aurora, on the Cayuga Lake, N. Y., January 10, 1822. His father, B. Ledyard Cuyler, was a lawyer of brilliant promise, who died when his only son was four years old; the venerable mother still survives. His ancestry were from Holland on the one side, and from the Huguenots on the other. Young Cuyler graduated at Princeton College at the age of nineteen, and spent several months in Great Britain, visiting favorite authors and seeking out historic haunts. Rejecting strong temptations, both to the bar and to the pursuits of literature, he entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and was licensed to preach in April, 1846. After three years of service at Burlington, N. J., he became the first pastor of a new Presbyterian Church at Trenton, which proved very successful. Called to New York City in 1853—immediately after his marriage to Miss Annie E. Matthiot of Ohio—he was installed over the Market Street Reformed Dutch Church, and soon became one of the most popular preachers to young men in the great metropolis. Every week he appeared on the platform of public meetings in the advocacy of various enterprises and moral reforms.

His favorite movement, for the promotion of temperance, he defended before legislative bodies and popular assemblies, and has always given to it the aid of his vigorous pen. Doctor Cuyler has one of the indispensable elements for success — a great faculty for hard work. Few men are as unwearied and as unwearible as he. In 1860, a newly organized Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn invited him to become its first pastor. He accepted the invitation, and the spacious Lafayette Avenue Church edifice was reared — which has been the scene of his pulpit labors for three and twenty years. He soon built up, by his untiring zeal, one of the largest and most powerful churches in his denomination. Incessant pastoral visitation during the week has never prevented him from studious and careful preparation for his pulpit ; he once informed the writer that he had “never lost but two Sabbaths from sickness during his whole life.”

A small, spare man, of thin, sallow countenance, with dark hair and eyes, and a full oratorical mouth — attired in a pulpit robe — he stands before his audience, with no attempts at the “sensational” in style or delivery. His voice is versatile and commanding ; sometimes low and melodious as a flute, it often swells into a volume which sweeps and sways the largest assemblies. On this flexible instrument his feelings have full play. Striking, but simple declarations of Bible-truth — lucid statements as the strongest form of argument — a rare art of putting things, a heartfelt tone of sympathy, delicate felicities of expression, all are infused with a solemn sincerity which is the evident atmosphere in which his soul lives, moves, and has its being. “I

*believe*, therefore have I spoken," is written on every feature and every tone.

No shadow of doubt as to the plenary inspiration of God's word, or as to the truth of the evangelical doctrines, has ever disturbed him; the positiveness of his faith and utterances has ever been an element of his power as a religious teacher. The gospel of Jesus Christ is to him always and everywhere not only much, but everything. Yet this staunch orthodoxy has never interfered with a wide Christian catholicity. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness," when an "Old School" Presbyterian Seminary gave its pulpit commission to Theodore L. Cuyler.

Although so indefatigably devoted to the interests of his own flock, he has become most widely known by his immensely numerous contributions to the leading religious journals. The late Bishop Haven pronounced him "the most popular writer on experimental religion in America."

His fixed rule has been for thirty years, never to allow a week to pass without the preparation of one or more articles for the press. He has contributed about one thousand articles to the New York *Evangelist*, four hundred and twenty to the *Independent*, and many hundreds more have been scattered through the columns of the *Presbyterian*, the *Congregationalist*, the *Christian at Work*, the *Chicago Advance*, the *Christian Intelligencer*, the *Illustrated Weekly*, *Sunday School Times*, *National Temperance Advocate*, and several other influential journals. Many of these contributions have been re-published in London and Edinburgh, and thence have passed by

translation into various languages over the continent. A handsome volume of selections has appeared in Dutch.

Doctor Cuyler has achieved that difficult newspaper feat, a thoroughly readable religious article — achieved it by a full heart, a full head, and a *Je ne sais quoi*, that certain something which — call it talent or genius — enables its possessor to say his say with an aptness of expression that gives enjoyment and edification to every reader.

President Lincoln once said to him, "I used to keep up with you every week in the *Independent*." And in frontier settlements his pithy pieces are read aloud in devotional meetings. This happy faculty of adaptation, with tongue or pen, to all sorts and conditions of men, received a good illustration when the venerable Washington Irving, after hearing him address a company of children, came up and whispered in his ear, "My friend, I would like to be one of your parishioners."

During the heats of midsummer no object is more familiar to the visitors in Congress Park, Saratoga, than the slight, wiry figure of the pastor of the Lafayette Avenue Church; the same man who is read by sailors and frontier settlers has preached over one hundred of his practical discourses to thronged auditories in that cosmopolitan centre of summer resort.

The principal volumes which Doctor Cuyler has published are his *Heart Life*, the *Empty Crib*, the *Cedar Christian*, *Pointed Papers for the Christian Life*, *Thought Hives*, and *God's Light on Dark Clouds*. These have all been printed in England. He has also published a sketch-book of travel, *From the Nile to Norway*, and a

great number of tracts on various topics. One of these — “Somebody’s Son” — directed against the custom of offering intoxicants to young men on New Year’s day, has been effective in clearing the decanters from not a few hospitable tables.

From these various sources — of volume, tract, or periodical publications — the following selections have been made. They all reveal, in greater or less degree, the same qualities of incisive directness, of graphic portraiture, of genial sympathy, of keen observation, of human nature and of honest loyalty to the inspired teachings of the Book of Books. M. S. H.





## RIGHT TO THE POINT.

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### I.

EVERY human mind we meet is a moving thought-hive. To our eye it is hidden, but to the eye of God it is a hive of transparent glass. The thoughts which nestle within us, and issue from us in language and in act determine our moral character. The most exquisite piece of sculpture which a Powers or a Palmer ever carved, was once only a thought ; but their skilful hands smote the white marble until the beautiful images of the brain came forth. Upon the thought of James Watt and Robert Fulton we cross the trackless sea ; while in its silent depths the thought of Professor Morse has laid the magic wire over which two continents converse.

All the grandest enterprises of benevolence, and all the most stupendous crimes, were once only invisible phantoms in some man's or woman's busy brain. The order of the Jesuits swarmed out of Ignatius Loyola's heart-hive ; Sunday-schools

swarmed out of Robert Raikes.' If the jailer of Bedford prison had starved John Bunyan, he would have smothered the *Pilgrim's Progress* in its cradle. The very Bible is only God's blessed and holy *thought* revealed to us; by it we are made 'wise unto salvation.

## II.

A noble career depends on the treatment given to the infant ideas that are born in the soul. A person is known by the company he keeps. So the thoughts which we harbor within us, and which go out through the doors of our mouths and our hands, determine our real character.

One of the highest of spiritual luxuries is the enjoyment of pure and exhilarating and sublime thoughts; to such a devout and cheerful thinker a prison may be a palace. "I thought of Jesus," said holy Rutherford, "until every stone in the walls of my cell shone like a ruby."

## III.

No more decisive influence can be brought to bear upon any age, or any community, than the employment of its highest intellect for truth or for error—for God and the right, or for the devil's wrong. Intellect ennobled, purified, heaven-directed, is the universal power to build up. Intellect per-

verted, corrupted, sin-directed, is the most terrible of agencies to pull down and destroy. "How shall I use my intellect?" is the most vital moral problem that can come before the court of your conscience. . . . .

God never gave to man fine intellectual powers, vigorous understanding, strong-winged imagination, cunning invention, or soul-rousing eloquence, for the owner's sole use and benefit. Talent is trust. Let no man covet it unless there comes with it wisdom from above to insure it a right direction.

#### IV.

Some men hold that talents are given for the same purpose that wealth is often inherited — for mere personal luxury. There be intellectual millionnaires who decorate their mind, as a palace, for pride to walk through. Its superb picture galleries, whose walls a creative imagination has clothed with visions of entrancing beauty; its saloons of receptiveness, in which stately thoughts do come and go; its costly libraries, where memory stores up its massive accumulation, shelf on shelf; its statue-lined corridors and halls — are but the splendid realm which self has adorned by the "might of its own power, and for the honor of its own majesty." Scarcely a living being is the wiser, the better, the happier, for such mental monopolists. They stand

in the midst of humanity as the marble mansion of a selfish duke might stand in the midst of a poverty-cursed and squalid peasantry. While the nabob is gorging at his rosewood table, or lounging before his Murillos, the poor Lazarus without is begging crumbs for the lean and hungry brats such as Murillo portrayed upon his canvas. One man surfeits, the others starve. There is enough for all, if it were distributed. Distribution is Heaven's law, whether the treasures be in the lordly mansion or in the lordly mind.

The meanest of misers is he who hoards a truth.

## V.

All the men and women who have made their mark in this world and have achieved the best results, have kept the eye clear and single toward one noble purpose. The master passion with Newton, the prince of Christian philosophers, was science. He attributed his splendid successes in discovery to the simple principle of "always *intending* my mind," upon the one thing in hand. Luther jarred all Europe by continually hurling the great revealed truth of "justification by faith" against its old ramparts of superstition. Such men swing their whole being into one direction. The effective Christian is the man who unites all his powers into a single pile or package, and then binds them round with this strong cord — "the love of Christ con-

straineth me." So Paul bound up his, and hurled the mass with such momentum that it burst through and has come bounding on even into these modern centuries. . . . .

. . . All human talents and possessions are but ciphers until you put the name of Jesus at the head of them. Then they make their owner a millionaire for Heaven.

## VI.

One student uses his brain, as he uses his midnight lamp — merely to illuminate the page before his single eye. Another man makes his intellect a meridian sun ! How bountifully does the full urn of noonday overflow ! Not only on Alpine peaks, and the "heart of the Andes," kindled into pyramids of fire, but down into modest vales the sunlight falls, warming the honeysuckle o'er the cottage doorway, lifting the tiny wheat-blade from its earthly tomb ; and, even when some solitary daisy is shaded beneath an overgrown tree, the generous sun wheels round and round, until before nightfall the daisy too is reached, and fills her little cup with golden light. Such full-orbed intellects there be. They turn midnight into noon. Upon the most elevated minds and the most favored classes their rays may fall earliest ; but at length the lowliest valleys of human life are warmed in the celestial influence. So rose the tent-maker of Tarsus upon a

benighted age. Amid the gloom of the sixth century shone out Augustine; amid the prejudice of the fifteenth beamed Christopher Columbus.

The sixteenth century came in with clouds and darkness on its awful front. God said, "Let there be light," and Luther was! When his sun departed with its trail of glory, the moral heavens beamed, in turn with Lord Bacon, Milton, Isaac Newton, Leibnitz, Pascal, Edwards, Chalmers — each an overflowing orb of truth.

## VII.

Learning and Eloquence — getting the truth and giving the truth — are the two most attainable possessions for every healthy mind. For while the Creator has bestowed great analytical acumen as a gift comparatively rare; while the imagination which can

Glance from Heaven to Earth,  
From Earth to Heaven,

belongs to a favored few; while fertility of invention is a monopoly of genius — yet nearly every healthy intellect can acquire truth and impart it.

## VIII.

Eloquence is the golden product of an inspired heart. No elaboration of rhetoric, no oratorical

culture, can produce it, which ignores the spontaneous emotions of an honest, fearless, loving heart.

The loftier the emotion, the more impressive the utterance of the orator. The same law applies to eloquence that applies to hydrostatics. If the jet is to be thrown to a height in the public fountain, the spring that feeds the fountain must have a lofty birthplace on the mountain-side.

What is eloquence but truth in earnest? The mind's best words spoken in the mind's best moments. When truth gets full possession of a man's conscience; when all his sensibilities are aroused and his sympathies in full play; when the soul becomes luminous, until the interior light and glow blaze out through every loop and crevice; when, from head to foot, the whole man becomes the beaming, burning impersonation of truth—then is he honestly, naturally, irresistibly eloquent. To this a great head is not always essential; a great heart is, and must be.

## IX.

A logical sequence of the telegraph which conveys written words, is the telephone which conveys spoken sounds. It is certainly a crowning marvel that a speech pronounced in Boston should pronounce itself over the wires to an audience in Brooklyn, and the *Marseilles Hymn* played in

New York should be audible in Washington. But the Creator did a far more wonderful thing when he made a human telephone. A mere thought so acts from the brain upon that cunning mind instrument in the larynx that the thought makes itself audible in an instant to an assembled multitude. The telephone of the tongue is a wonderful instrument. Our Lord employed it speaking as never man spake. On the hillside over Capernaum he touched the cords of that telephone and the multitude received the matchless Sermon on the Mount into their consciences. Other tongues have been taking up the strain, until for eighteen centuries that same sermon has gone into myriads of human lives. Eloquence is never so grand and so godlike as when it is made the telephone of saving truth to immortal and imperilled souls. When an intrepid and Heaven-inspired man presents himself before an assemblage of such souls and pours himself out in a resistless stream of argument made red-hot by holy emotion, the whole man becomes the beaming and burning impersonation of truth; then does such an ambassador of Christ become to his listening auditors as one of the "oracles of God."

Paul pleading before Athenian skeptics on the Hill of Mars; Martin Luther sounding his bugle blast of defiance before the Imperial Diet; George Whitefield depicting the perils of a lost sinner on the verge of the precipice of Hell, until Lord



Chesterfield exclaimed, "Good God! the man is gone!" Charles G. Finney reasoning of righteousness and the judgment to come until proud scoffers turned pale as marble before his pulpit—all these men became as electric batteries charged with "the power from on high"—and delivering men from the paralysis of spiritual death into the marvellous light and the life everlasting. There is not a grander spectacle for angels' eyes than fearless, single-hearted Moody sounding his telephone in the focus of cultured Boston, until ten thousand hearts vibrate to his heaven-sent message.

Some people regard the Word of God as a mere miscellaneous collection of disjointed fragments. They could not make a greater mistake. The Bible is as thoroughly connected and consecutive a work as Bunyan's "Pilgrim," or Bancroft's History. The whole composition hangs together like a fleece of wool. It begins with the creation of the world; it ends with the winding-up of all earthly things and the opening scenes of the endless hereafter. The Old Testament is the majestic vestibule through which we enter the matchless Parthenon of the New. It is mainly the history of God's covenant people. Through all this history of nearly forty centuries are interspersed the sublime conversations of Job, the pithy proverbs of Solomon, and the predictions of the Prophets. We hear, at their proper intervals, the timbrel of Miriam, the harp of the Psalmist, the plaintive viol of Jeremiah,

and the sonorous trumpets of Isaiah and Habakkuk.

Through all the Old Testament there flows one warm and mighty current — like the warm river of the Gulf Stream through the Atlantic — setting towards Jesus Christ. In Genesis he appears as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head; the smoke of Abel's altar points towards him; the blood that stains the Jewish lintels on the night of the Exodus is but a type of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; Moses and the prophets testify of Jesus. Just as the rich musical blast of an Alpine horn on the Wengern is echoed back from the peaks of the Jungfrau, so every verse of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is echoed in the New Testament of Immanuel.

After a silence of four hundred years, the New Testament begins — and with the genealogy of the incarnate Saviour. The first four books are occupied with the earthly life and sacrificial death and resurrection and ascension of the same Personage. The four independent narratives of the evangelists — like the four walls of a church edifice — contain and enclose the complete narrative of Christ's life. Each one has its place and its purpose. Matthew wrote for the Jews, and in his gospel Christ is represented as a king; the book describes his kingdom and its laws. Mark describes his wondrous deeds as the man of action — the Christ as a servant doing his Father's will. Luke wrote for the

Gentiles, and of Jesus as the Son of Man. John occupies his rich aromatic pages with the wonderful words of the Son of God. He defines his special object at the close of his twentieth chapter: "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name."

## X.

The biographies of Jesus are completed, but not his life upon earth. The next book carries it forward. He still lives by his Spirit in the chosen apostles. The Book of the Acts written by Luke, commences with these words — "The *former* treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach." This second treatise simply continues to narrate what Christ does and teaches through his apostles and representatives. It is devoted to the founding of Christian churches in certain great centres of influence, like Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. The churches thus founded must next be instructed in the commandments of their Lord and be indoctrinated in the practical principles of holy living. Hence arises a necessity for the Epistles. Each has its province. The epistle to the Romans is the grand argument for justification by faith. That to the Galatians treats of deliverance from the bondage of the law. The

letter to the Philippians is redolent of gratitude and of joy in hours of trouble. Its motto is "gaudeo; gaudete!" The epistle to the Ephesians is the setting forth of the "heavenlies;" that to Philemon is the charter of human rights and the seed of emancipation-proclamations; the epistles to the Corinthians are manuals for personal conduct and the government of churches. When Paul wrote to Timothy and to Titus, he furnished manuals for Christian pastors. John's epistles are all love-letters — the effusive sweetness of the heart's honey-comb. When Apollos penned the Epistle to the Hebrews (as I am inclined to believe that he did) he set forth the priestly office of Jesus and the blessings of personal faith. Peter utters the practical precepts and warnings that are needed not only by the dispersed disciples, but by all disciples to the end of time.

When the life, the death, and the mighty works and divine instruction of Christ (by his apostles) have been completed, there bursts upon us the magnificent panorama of the Apocalypse. This is the book of sublime mysteries. But through all the apparent confusions of thrones and of armies, of thunders and lightnings, of trumpets and viols and winged angels, we can distinctly trace the progress of the final conflict between King Jesus and the Powers of darkness. The long battle terminates in the overthrow of Satan, and the glorious

victory of Him who wears on his head the many crowns. Then comes the final resurrection of the dead, the general Judgment, the revelation of the New Jerusalem, prepared for the endless habitation of the redeemed. The Apocalypse closes with its "seven-fold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

Such is the wondrous volume which God has given to man, and which outweighs all the libraries on the globe. It contains many writings; yet is it but *one book*. It has many writers; yet it is all from one Author, the Almighty Spirit of God. The pure, white, spotless fleece hath throughout its connecting fibres; the fabric is divine in its origin, its unity, and its imperishable power and glory.

## XI.

In putting on your armor don't forget that the Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Not content with merely reading your Bible, study it. Instead of skimming over whole acres of truth put your spade into the most practical passages and dig deep. Study the twenty-fifth Psalm and the twelfth chapter of Romans, as well as the sublime eighth chapter. Study the whole epistle of James. It will teach you how a Christian ought to behave before the world. As you get on further you may strike your hoe and your mattock down into the rich ore-beds of the Book of John. Saturate your heart with God's Word.

## XII.

The real currency in commerce is metallic the broad earth over. And the gold and silver which make up the basis of personal wealth are the product of the mines; each glittering coin the result of the miner's hard toil with sieve or with mattock. Now, the currency of God's kingdom is *truth*; and the Bible is the ore-bed. To every one this mine is open. He must be a blind or a careless miner who does not come out of this inexhaustible ore-bed with some new and massive "nugget" as the result of every hour's research. Do you consider every bank solvent whose vaults are the hiding-place of solid bullion, amply sufficient to meet its liabilities? So is a Christian solvent, whose secret soul is stored with gospel principles, all coined and stamped for daily use. Nor should any Christian ask credit further than he can fully redeem his promises and professions by the "ready money" of consistent godly conduct.

## XIII.

The oldest poem in the world is the grandest. While the human race has been advancing in science and art and literature, it remains true that in sublime and magnificent poetry, the first stroke on the bell *struck twelve*. The patriarch of poetry

remains to this day its king ; no man has taken away his crown. Long afterwards Homer sang his song of Troy, and Virgil touched the same historic chords with feebler hand. Centuries later the blind old Puritan unfolded his visions of Paradise with the glittering ranks of the cherubim in amaranth and gold. Many-sided Shakespeare, too, came into Britain in a sort of stealthy way, burying up his tracks in mystery so that some scholars have even doubted his existence, yet leaving behind him his wonderful progeny of Hamlets, Macbeths, and Othellos. But all the sublimities of Homer, Virgil, Milton and Shakespeare combined do not reach the altitude of that marvellous poem which was born in the very infancy of the human race.

Hundreds of later poets have pillaged from its treasure-house of sublime splendors. Thousands of Christian ministers have expounded its theology. Orators have been inspired by its lofty imagery. Charles James Fox confessed that if he had ever succeeded in parliamentary eloquence, he owed his success to a diligent study of this oldest of human compositions. It has had a hundred readers where any other poetical production has had a single one ; it is the delight of the sage and of the saint, of the philosopher and the peasant, of old men and maidens, of the students of nature, and the student of things heavenly and divine.

Who first wrote out on papyrus-leaves this wonderful book — which is biography, history, theology and poetry combined in one — nobody knows. Some claim that Moses was the inspired compiler of the work. Others hold that about the time of the captivity, some gifted Jew collected it into its present shape. The sceptic school of critics declare it to be a profound parable on a large scale, or a sublime myth.

Amid the dim mists of antiquity which hang around its origin we can be sure of a few facts. We are sure that the hero of the work was not a native Jew. He did not live in Palestine — but somewhere on the vast plateaus that skirt the river Euphrates. He was a sheik or an emir of the old Shemitic race. He owned vast herds, and was a great lord of the manor among the wandering tribes of the East. He and his three most intimate friends were familiar with music, metallurgy, military affairs, and to some degree with astronomy. And to them were revealed (by some mysterious inspiration) the profoundest thoughts in regard to human suffering and sin, in regard to the divine government, in regard to those deep things of God which no human philosophy has ever fathomed! Truly this patriarch of theological poems stands without a model and without a successor. Like Melchisedeck it appears without any known human father; and like Melchisedeck it has “no end of life.”



## XIV.

The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is the inspired hymn of Love. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is the sublime epic of Faith.

## XV.

A great many precious spiritual truths lie concealed under the out-of-the-way passages of God's Word — like Wordsworth's

— violet 'neath a mossy stone half hidden from the eye.

## XVI.

If a sea-captain is worthless who is ignorant of his chart, a Christian is ill-equipped who is ignorant of God's Word. It is the soul's corn. The more thoroughly it is ground, and baked, and eaten, and digested, the more you will grow thereby. It is the sword of the Spirit. The more it is scoured the brighter it shineth ; the more it is wielded the safer you are against the adversary. A vital need of the hour is *more Bible*

## XVII.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is the thrilling record of a whole line of spiritual navigators, whose anchor of faith never dragged.

## XVIII.

Some characters in the Bible are painted with a single stroke. Enoch, the stanch old patriarch, who walked with God ; Caleb the faithful, who followed the Lord *fully* ; Dorcas, who made the needle sacred ; Onesiphorus, the model gentleman, who oft refreshed Paul, and “ was not ashamed of his chain ; ” Demas, the deserter from duty — all these and many others owe their peculiar immortality to a mere line or two of Holy Writ.

## XIX.

The old Bible truths are the freshest, after all. They have a perennial grandeur, like the Alps, at every new view of them ; they have a perennial sweetness, like that honey which is set before you every morning on your Swiss mountain rambles.

## XX.

God's word is an inexhaustible jewel bed. What a gem of the first water is this beautiful text : “ At evening time it shall be light.” Like a many sided diamond, it flashes out as many truths as it has polished sides. As the diamond has the quality of glistening in dim and darksome places, so this passage shines brightly in seasons of trouble and despondency.

## XXI.

Contact with Christ brings currents of the divine power into our souls, so that we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. At the very outset of the spiritual life, this divine strength becomes recognized. A Gough or a Sawyer testifies that he gained his victory over the bottle by the influx of a new principle and a new power into his heart. The essence of conversion with them was that the seven devils of lust for the cup were cast out, and Christ came in. This was a supernatural work, the very thing that modern scepticism hoots at; but a Bible which did not bring a supernatural element into weak and wicked humanity would not be worth the paper on which it is printed.

## XXII.

Food is fuel to the body, repairing what is burnt away by various vital processes. How can a soul be either fed or warmed that seldom touches the Bread of Life? All the most growing Christians are large feeders on the Word of God.

What delicious feeding there is on the Promises? The soul delights itself with them, as with marrow and fatness. There is no end of the honeycomb that distils from the fourteenth chapter of John. We can feed more than five thousand, besides the women and children, with the single big loaf—

"This is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life." There was a great wealth of Christian experience in the homely vernacular of Uncle Johnson, the veteran negro, when he said to his pastor, "I'se t'inking dat if de crumbs of joy dat fall from de Massa's table in dis world am so good, what will de great loaf in glory be? I wants to get hold ob de full dish. O, massa, ef you gets home afore I do, tell 'em to keep de table standin,' for old Johnson is on his way, and is bound to be dere."

### XXIII.

God means that every soul which waits on him shall sometimes soar. Not creep nor grovel in the muck of worldliness, or crouch in bondage to man or devils, but rise above all these baser things into the atmosphere of heaven. When a soul binds itself to God it finds wings. Such an one has a citizenship in the skies. He catches inspiration from the Spirit. He rises above the chilling fogs of doubt, gains a wide outlook, is filled with ennobling thoughts, and actually feels that he is an heir to a celestial inheritance. His soul-life is hid with Christ in God. What cares the eagle, as he bathes his wing in the translucent gold of the sunbeam — for all the turmoil, the smoke, the clouds, or even the lightnings that play far beneath him? He flies in company with the unclouded sun. So a heaven-

bound soul, filled with the joys of the Holy Spirit, flies in company with God. . . .

"They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles." There is a ring in this passage like the blast of a bugle. He makes a very great mistake who supposes that the word "wait" implies an indolent passivity. The Hebrew word has brawn and bone in it; its signification is primarily *to be strong* — strong enough to hold out under pressure. Thence the word came to signify patience as the opposite of discouragement and peevishness. When a soul is ready to do God's will and to submit cheerfully to God's discipline, and to receive such fulness of supply as God is willing to bestow, that soul may be truly said to "wait on the Lord." It is a great grace, and it leads to a great glory. The man who thus waits on God renews his strength. He does more; he receives a wonderful *inspiration*. He "shall mount up with wings as an eagle." Naturalists tell us that the special power of the eagle is in his wings. He can fly in the teeth of the gale, and go out on long voyages toward the clouds, and play the aeronaut for hours without weariness. His "conversation is in the heavens." The sparrow twitters from the housetop, the dove is content to abide in the forest, but the eagles are children of the skies and playthings of the storms. Even their nests are on the crags.

## XXIV.

Nothing tends more to the elevation of character than to have a high ideal. . . .

There must be higher longing, even, before there is any attempt at higher living. No artist ever attains to eminence who is perfectly satisfied with the first picture he hangs in an exhibition-room. The Christian who is satisfied with himself is the very one over whom the Spirit grieves and the Master is ashamed.

## XXV.

The less we expect from this world the better for us. The less we expect from our fellow-men whether of spiritual help or of inspiring example, the smaller will be our disappointment. He that leans on his own strength leans on a broken reed. We are always *going* to be something stronger, purer, and holier. Somewhere in the future there always hangs in the air a golden *ideal* of a higher life that we are going to reach; but as we move on the dream of better things moves on before us also. It is like the child's running over behind the hill to catch the rainbow. When he gets on the hill-top the rainbow is as far off as ever. Thus does our day dream of a higher Christian life keep floating away from us; and we are left to realize what frail, unreliable creatures we are when we rest our expectations of growth and victory over evil in ourselves.

“My soul, wait thou only upon God! My expectation is only *from Him*.”

## XXVI.

During our visit to the Yosemite Valley, we lodged at an inn that fronted a majestic cliff. The perpendicular wall of granite towered up more than three thousand feet. Upon one of the peaks of this cliff floated a white flag. It was the first object which caught the rays of the morning sun. That signal flag marks “Eagle Point,” one of the highest observatories which overlooks the wonderful Yosemite. And that flag floated both as a challenge and a guide to those of us who were in the deep valley beneath. It seemed to say: Come up hither and ye shall see wondrous things. Accepting the challenge, one party after another mounted their ponies, and picking their toilsome way along the dizzy ledges on the side of the precipice, they made a four-hours climb to the tiptop point, whence they viewed all the glories of the Sierra Nevadas.

In the spiritual life there is an “Eagle Point.” It is the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The divinely inspired command, *Seek those things which are above*. It is the divine challenge, invitation, and incentive to the higher, purer, holier life. That signal sends down the double invitation to look higher and to live higher. . . . .

No traveller reaches "Eagle Point" who is overloaded with luggage. No Christian attains to the higher life while he is overladen with constant worries about this world, or while he is attempting to carry his cherished sins along with him, or while he is ham-strung with unbelief. Repentance is the first process.

The "Eagle Point" that crowns the Yosemite brought a rich reward to those tough climbers who reached its magnificent outlook. From the coigne of vantage they beheld things indescribable and drank in new visions of the Creator's glory.

And we shall see greater things than these; we shall breathe a purer atmosphere, and taste more heavenly joys, and feel a quicker rush of spiritual life, and gain strength for heavier conflicts, and get inspiring views of the "things that are hereafter," if we but break loose from the beggarly elements of this world and seek the things that are above. It is the pierced hand of our Divine Master that waves the signal to us. It is his loving voice that calls us to "come up higher." Heaven will not be far off.

## XXVII.

The one hundred and twenty-first Psalm is one of the most soul-inspiring in the whole psalter. It is named a "song of degrees;" that is, a song of ascent leading from the lower up to the higher.



Whether this was originally intended as a musical expression or as a description of the ascent to the sacred mount in Jerusalem, it happily describes the spiritual idea of the psalm. The key-note is in the first verse. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help is from the Lord which made heaven and earth." The grand idea is that we must look higher if we would live higher. We must have help from heaven if we would reach heaven.

## XXVIII.

In the best sense of the term Paul was a man of one idea. The "hold" of his intellect was abundantly stored with resources of learning, argument and rich mental gifts; but a single holy purpose trod the quarter-deck, and floated its ensign from the peak. "Go a little deeper," said a wounded French soldier at Austerlitz to the surgeon who was probing his left side for the bullet — "go a little deeper, and you will find the Emperor." So the great apostle might say; go a little deeper — go to the inmost core of my heart, and you will find the crucified Jesus. Other feelings I am possessed of, but this one possesses me. Other affections lie near the surface; but this master passion lurks and lives in the inmost centre of my soul. For me to live is Christ. This *one* thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind and reaching

forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

## XXIX.

It is glorious work to preach for souls. No throne has ever been built which comes within ten leagues of the pulpit, which proclaims Christ and the great salvation. The pulpit is best filled which helps most to fill heaven.

## XXX.

One of the peculiar glories of Christianity is that it presents to us — what no other religion furnishes — a perfect model for our daily conduct. No other religion can produce a Lord Jesus Christ. And Christ is Christianity. It is not the Gospel system that saves us. It is the Gospel's Redeemer. That preaching is the most effective which most clearly and persuasively presents Jesus as the Divine Saviour. Substitute and Surety; that life is the most symmetrical and holy which is the most closely copied after him as the divine model.

## XXXI.

For the effective preaching of the inspired Word, splendid intellectual power or profound scholarship

are not essential. Some of the best work has been wrought by men of moderate talents and attainments. But it argues equally that the best work only can be wrought by ministers who are intensely persuaded of the plenary inspiration of God's Book and are intensely earnest in preaching its core-doctrines — ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, and regeneration by the Spirit, a retribution of endless life and death to all who accept or reject the heavenly message. For one, I would order the door of admission wide open to the ministry on the purely intellectual side, but not one inch on the spiritual side. Let every man of robust faith and robust piety come in who feels in his heart "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel!" But let no man in however brilliant his powers, who is wavering in his loyalty to the Revealed Truth, or lukewarm towards the sins and the sufferings of his fellow-men.

## XXXII.

There is one sense in which every true minister ought to be broad — broad as the love of God, and the wants of perishing humanity; and at the same time as narrow as the straight line of God's righteousness. The fear we have is that superior intellectual gifts and scholarship may be deemed more essential than superior spiritual gifts and loyalty to vital truth. Is he smart? Is he in danger of over-

riding the more important question? Is he sincere and sound? Let no one falsely charge us with lowering the standard of ministerial qualification to weak goody goodishness or even to the most fervent piety without a corresponding capacity to achieve results. All will agree that the achievement of spiritual results is the main thing. And the ministry which is either flaccid in spiritual fibre and in faith in the corner-stone doctrines—or frigid in its heart sympathies with its fellowmen, is not likely to win souls to Christ. On the other hand, experience proves that an energetic, indomitable will, fired with a holy zeal, has produced a rich harvest of results out of very moderate endowment of talents. The gift of godly mindedness is the best gift and talent for a minister.

### XXXIII.

If Christ is at the helm, why should I be running about the deck in distress, lest the vessel sink? If God lets you and me labor for him in vain, it is his loss more than ours. Duty belongs to us, results belong to him. Then let us work—and wait—and trust—and leave our loads with Jesus.

### XXXIV.

It is always a satisfaction to hear a man speak the *truth*. Christ judges his servants according to

what they have; never according to what they have not.

To win even one soul is a reward for a lifetime's toil.

## XXXV.

Power to win souls is derived from close living contact with the Divine Source of all power. When I was a student at Princeton, Professor Henry had so constructed a huge bar of iron, bent into the form of a horseshoe, that it used to hang suspended from another iron bar above it. Not only did it hang there, but it upheld four thousand pounds weight attached to it! That horseshoe magnet was not welded or glued to the metal above it; but through the iron wire coiled around it there ran a subtle current of electricity from a galvanic battery. Stop the flow of the current one instant and the huge horseshoe dropped. So does all the *lifting power* of a Christian come from the currents of spiritual influence which flow into his heart from the Living Jesus. The strength of the Almighty One enters into the believer. If his connection with Christ is cut off in an instant, he becomes as weak as any other man.

## XXXVI.

There are many ways of preaching Christ's gospel without choosing a text or standing in a

pulpit. This glorious work is not restricted to any time or place, or class of individuals. A Wilberforce could proclaim the gospel of love on the platform of Exeter Hall, or the floor of Parliament House, though he never wore a surplice, and never had a prelate's ordaining hand upon his honored head. Thomas Cranfield preached to the boisterous rabble of Wapping, till in their delight, they were ready to reward him with three cheers for his thrilling exhortation. Hannah Moore preached Christ in the drawing-room; and Elizabeth Fry in the prison-cell. Harlan Page scattering tracts through a city workshop; Nettleton whispering his solemn words to weeping souls in an inquiry-meeting; the Dairyman's Daughter murmuring the name of Jesus with her faint dying voice, and the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, leaning on his crook to talk about eternity to a passer-by, were all intensely earnest preachers of righteousness. The Church has had few more faithful preachers than Thomas Halyburton, and his most impressive discourses were delivered on a dying bed. "This is the best pulpit," said he, "that ever I was in; I am laid on this bed for this very end that I may commend my Lord."

### XXXVII.

We pastors too often forget that our people care very little about many of those abstract and

abstruse points that awaken a keen intellectual interest in our own minds when we are among our books and theological reviews. They come to church wearied with the cares and worries of the week. They want to be drawn up from themselves nearer to God. Some of them have had a sharp sorrow during the past week, and long to be comforted. Others are under sore temptations, and ought to be taught how to meet them, and overcome them. Others are very near eternity, and must soon be prepared for it; their time is short.

If every preacher of the Word would bear these simple facts in mind, he would certainly strive to be more practical, more plain, more pungent, and more desirous to bring home the *pure Gospel* without adulteration, to the hearts of his hearers. And if that sly devil of self stole up to his study-chair, and whispered in his ear the subtle temptation to aim at a great sermon, or a brilliant sermon, or a profoundly philosophical sermon, he would promptly say, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"

### XXXVIII.

There are many passages in the Word of God that most readers pass by, as they would pass unlighted transparencies in the street at night. If somebody sets a lamp or kindles a gas-jet behind the transparency, its picture or inscription becomes

luminous, attracting all eyes to it. One purpose of good preaching is to set lamps behind neglected passages.

### XXXIX.

The aim of the gospel is to make men *see* Jesus. It contains a system of salvation ; but it is not the system that saves. Ninety-nine hundredths of our congregations believe the chief proposition of Christianity as much as they believe that Washington was the first President of the United States. But that faith works no heart-change, delivers no one from the power of sin and secures no hope of Heaven. The only saving faith is that which sees Jesus, and accepts Jesus, and joins the soul to Jesus. It joins person to Person, the branch to the Vine, the sinner to the Saviour. If we fail in making our congregations see Jesus, then is the most eloquent preaching a pious sham.

### XL.

When Jesus is presented and pressed upon a sinner's acceptance, he must be presented as not only infinitely tender, compassionate, and lovable, but as so infinitely holy that his eyes flash flame through everything *wrong*. The very bitterness of his sacrificial sufferings for us on the Cross arose from the bitterness of the sin he died to atone.



## XLI.

No man ever preaches God's simple Word of life to even a handful of auditors without some results. No message faithfully spoken is left wholly unblest ; no word returns to the divine Giver, unless it have at least imposed a new responsibility on the souls that hear it.

## XLII.

The minister of Christ need not betake himself to the drama of Greece, the forum of Rome, or to the mystic retreats of German philosophy ; he need not study Chatham in the Senate Chamber, or Erskine at the bar. He may ever be nurturing his soul amid those pages where John Milton fed, before those eyes, which had "failed with long watching for liberty and law," beheld the gorgeous visions of "Paradise." He may be ever amid the scenes which inspired Bunyan to his matchless dream, and taught Jeremy Taylor his hearse-like melodies. The harp of Israel's minstrel is ever in his ear ; before his eye moves the magnificent panorama of the Apocalypse. He need but open his soul to that "oldest choral melody," the book of Job ; if it used to inspire Charles James Fox for the Parliament house, why not himself for the pulpit ? Paul is ever at his elbow to teach him trenchant argument ; John to teach persuasion ; and a

heart of steel must he have who is not moved to pathos in the chamber of heart-stricken David, or under the olive-trees of Gethsemane. The Bible is the best of models too, for it is always true to the life. It reaches up to the loftiest, down to the lowliest affairs of existence. The same divine pencil that portrayed the scenic splendors of the Revelations and the awful tragedy of Golgotha, condescends to etch for us a Hebrew mother bending over her cradle of rushes, a village maiden bringing home the gleanings of the barley fields, and a penitent woman weeping on the Saviour's feet. What God has ennobled, who shall dare to call common? What true orator of nature will fear to introduce into the pulpit a homely scene or a homespun character, a fireside incident or a death-bed agony, the familiar episodes of the field and the shop, the school-room and the nursery. He does not lower the dignity of the pulpit; he rather imparts to it the higher dignity of human nature.

### XLIII.

Fainting and desponding minister of Christ! Who shall dare to tell you, when you have come back from preaching the cross boldly and earnestly, that many an arrow may not have pierced the waiting souls around you? You may not have seen its flight. You may have heard no outcry of the wounded soul. You may have seen no tears, and

heard no groans. You may *never* hear them in this world. But in the great day of retribution you shall stand as God's appointed archer, with the trophies of redeeming grace about you, and stars shall blaze in the coronet of your rejoicing, now unseen, save by Him who seeth in secret and rewardeth openly.

## XLIV.

Good Christianity means cross-bearing. Good preaching means *cross-lifting*. From the manger of Bethlehem every footstep of Jesus moves straight towards the cross. His whole life converges there. After the Spirit's descent the only Gospel that was preached was the Gospel of atoning blood. It was Paul's keynote. Whatever else he omitted, he never omitted the "faithful saying." The preaching of these days, the only preaching that can silence skepticism, and convict sinners, and save the penitent, is the preaching which lifts up the crucified Son of God.

Nothing moves and melts the heart like the love-story of Calvary. Good old Gilbert Tennent was missed one Sabbath after his morning service. His family went in search of him. They found him in a woods near the church, lying on the ground and weeping like a child. They inquired the cause of his emotion. He told them that after preaching on the love of the dying Saviour he had gone out into the woods to meditate. He got such views of

the wondrous love of God in sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, that he was completely overwhelmed. The glory of the cross seemed to smite him down and break his very heart as it had the heart of Paul. He saw no one save Jesus only.

A clear, distinct look at Jesus is what every sinner also needs to convict him of guilt and break him down. The preaching which melts hard hearts is Christ-preaching — cross-preaching. It wounds, and it heals. It kills sin, and brings to the penitent sinner a new life. Moses had nothing else to do but to lift up the brazen serpent before the bitten, dying multitude in the camp. We ministers find our foremost duty, and our holiest delight in simply lifting up the atoning Lamb of God before the eyes of our congregations. Nothing else can touch and fire the true believer like the vision of his bleeding Lord. Brethren, let us lift up the cross! Let us rally to that as the last hope of a sin-cursed world — as the only breakwater against the floods of error and iniquity. If the cross of Calvary cannot save the world — *it is gone!* But it will! God has hung the destiny of the race on that cross. Our duty begins and ends in setting that one beacon of salvation full before the eye of every immortal soul.

#### XLV.

There is a hunger that grows by what it feeds upon; the pastor who realizes that on every Sab-

bath some immortal souls may be listening to their last message, will be very apt to keep the appetite for practical gospel keen and omnivorous. Ministers may run dry; the Bible and the daily needs of human hearts never do. To get honestly tired *in* preaching is vastly different from getting tired *of* it.

## XLVI.

It may sound extravagant, but it seems clear to my own mind that Chalmers was the most remarkable personage whom Protestantism has produced since the era of the Reformation. Certainly he is the king of Presbyterianism. Our Church has not had his equal since John Knox pointed his dying finger up towards Heaven. Chalmers *bulked* more largely than any man in our calendar of heroes; he had the most immense manhood; he swayed men with a more imperial presence and power; he combined in himself the overwhelming orator, the thoughtful philosopher, the sagacious leader, and the saintly apostle of Christ. Mr. Gladstone hit the idea very happily when — in his letter read at the centennial celebration — he spoke of the “warrior grandeur” of Thomas Chalmers. The leader of the Free Kirk Exodus was a born warrior, with the bravery of a paladin and the eagle eye of a commander, and yet with a woman’s tenderness sweetening and enriching his “stately and heavenly mind.” As a pulpit orator, he begins to be known

chiefly by tradition. His printed discourses — splendid as they are — give us but a small conception of what they were when delivered with a rush of enthusiasm and a volume of voice that made the rafters roar. Alexander Duff came nearest to him in oratorical power, but Duff was great only on one theme; he was the Chrysostom of Foreign Missions, and when he spoke on that topic, those who heard him “said that it thundered.” Chalmers was uniformly great, whether he was addressing the merchants of Glasgow, or the paupers of the West Port, or the peers and parliament-men in London. His immense manhood gave his speech an immense momentum.

## XLVII.

Christ himself never prepared a formula of truth and made the acceptance of that formula the one condition of salvation. His constant loving call was “Come unto Me;” his emphatic declaration was, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. When he presented the vital truth of the atonement it was only by presenting himself as the atoner.

What a monstrous mistake it is to present the most orthodox of theology in such a way as to draw attention to it alone; and project it before the cross of the crucified Lamb of God. Paul was scrupulously careful never to play the theologian

at the expense of the Christ-preacher. He determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. Wherever he stood — whether before scowling Pharisees or Roman pro-consuls or poor cripples at Lystra, or conscience-stricken sinners in a Macedonian dungeon — he just aimed to make them see no one but Jesus only.

## XLVIII.

Fidelity on the part of God's minister is the first step commonly towards bringing back to fidelity a delinquent church-member. The same infallible Teacher who commands us to "exhort," also commands us to "rebuke." At all hazards, *desertion* is a sin to be dealt with in earnest. Even a rebuke may be red-hot with love.

It is often wise to take a man at his own valuation, and let him know that you *need* him.

## XLIX.

There is no greater mistake than to present Christ our Elder Brother to mankind in too sombre an aspect, as the Man of Sorrows and mainly as the righteous condemner of sin. Rather should we present him as both loathing sin and loving the sinner. He came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

## L.

Everything that can be known about Calvin the world is anxious to hear. Presbyterians cherish his very shoe-latchet. He not only organized their church-system, but became the great organizing spirit of the Reformed churches throughout Europe. For the majestic doctrine of the Divine Sovereignty, Calvin did what Lord Bacon did for the philosophy of Induction. For republican freedom he did a work that made Geneva not only the freest but the most virtuous city on the Continent. It was not only Edwards who built on foundations which Calvin had laid ; but in building up free commonwealths, John Hampden, William the Silent, and George Washington reared on these same foundations too. It is not too much to say that John Calvin underlies not only all the sound Biblical theology, but all the republican liberty upon the globe. Even the most sagacious Romanists confess that his immortal Institutes constitute the Koran, or rather the Talmud of the Protestant heresy.

When a city is taken a sudden assault may place the conquering flag on the ramparts, yet for many months that conqueror may have been battering at the walls. The truth by which Calvin's strongly-fortified heart was stormed and carried by the Spirit was the simple, irresistible truth that *Jesus Christ died to save sinners.*



## LI.

A smooth popularity-hunting preacher is generally safe in "kings' houses," but the Luthers find their meed in Wartburg castles. The Latimers and the John Husses have their earnest voices smothered at the crackling stake, amid fire and smoke — and the tongues of the bold John Baptists are only safe to Satan's tyrants, when "the head is brought in on a charger."

## LII.

The great power of a good pastor over his people is *heart power*. Intellectual brilliancy may awaken the pride of a congregation in their minister; but it is his affectionate sympathy and personal kindness to them that awaken their love for him and keep it burning.

The mass of sinful men are only to be reached through their affections. Sympathy is power. Christ Jesus did not win Zaccheus the publican, by argument. He simply went to his house and won him by a divine sympathy.

## LIII.

No man should build so high, but the pulpit should build above him. No reckless youth in his wildest aberration of profligacy should ever reach a

pitfall or a precipice that had not been mapped out to him beforehand in the pulpit. And on life's rough highway no sinning sufferer should faint or fall, or be flung into thicket so dense and dark but over him should bend Christ's messenger of love, and into his bleeding wounds should distil the balm of Heaven's Gospel.

#### LIV.

It is not easy to exhaust a man who is always filling his head and heart from God's inexhaustible reservoir.

#### LV.

All choicest things are reckoned the dearest. So, is it too, in Heaven's inventories. The universe of God has never witnessed aught to be reckoned in comparison with the redemption of a guilty world. That mighty ransom no such contemptible things as silver and gold could procure. Only by one price could the Church of God be redeemed from hell, and that the precious blood of the Lamb — the Lamb without spot or blemish — the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

#### LVI.

The atoning blood is the central fact in the gospel system. If we are justified, it is by faith in

Jesus's blood; if we are purified it is because that blood cleanseth from sin; if we ever gain admission to the shining ranks of Paradise, it is because we have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

## LVII.

The Christian's *heart* understands the atonement better than the Christian's *head*. It is a difficult doctrine for the brain, but a sweet and simple one to the affections.

Jonathan Edwards could not comprehend the Atonement one whit more clearly nor intensely, than the Dairyman's daughter when she sang to herself —

How glorious the grace,  
When Christ sustained the stroke;  
His life and blood the Shepherd pays,  
A ransom for his flock.

## LVIII.

Let every troubled inquirer for salvation understand that the atoning blood of Jesus alone can pay the debt, and satisfy the demands of broken law. When you accept Christ, the load is lifted off; when the deadly disease is cured, the light, the joy, the strength, pour in like sun-rays through an opened window.

## LIX.

The will and testament made by the atoning Saviour can never be set aside or broken. All the powers of Hell cannot cheat the humblest child of Jesus out of his legacy. Every human being, lofty or lowly, a prince or pauper, is invited to become an heir. The estate is large enough to supply an universe of sinners with an eternity of bliss. At Christ's right hand are treasures and pleasures, forever more.

## LX.

It is an encouraging thought that Jesus is not only seeking to save you, but he will *miss* you, if you do not give your heart and your life to him. As the shepherd in the parable left the ninety and nine to hunt for the single straggler, so you may gladly hope that Jesus wants you in his fold and wants you in Heaven, or else he would not have come so far and endured so much to save you. If you leave yourself to die without him, there will be one more soul in hell. But if he is left without you, there will be one soul the less to chant his praises in the Golden City; he will have one the less to present before his Father "with exceeding joy." Surely there is a prodigious encouragement in the fact that the Saviour is so intent to find you, and therefore you ought to make a complete un-

reserved surrender of yourself to him *instantly*. As a converted man once said to Doctor Wisner of Ithaca — “I discovered that accepting Christ was only a moment’s work as soon as I was in earnest.”

It ought not to be long before you who are seeking Christ and the Christ who is seeking you, *come together*. On your part there must be genuine repentance of sin ; on his part there will be rescue, and reception into his fold. When you heartily trust him for salvation he will entrust himself with your salvation, and the momentous question is settled. As soon as you give yourself to the Saviour the Saviour gives himself to you, and there will be joy on both sides.

That is a fine stroke in the parable given by Luke in his fifteenth chapter, which depicts the divine joy of the Rescuer. When the loving and looking shepherd “findeth the sheep, he layeth it on his shoulders *rejoicing*.” He is glad for the sake of the rescued sheep, but still more for his own sake. It was for the joy set before him that he endured the cross of Calvary, and despised the shame.

What a glorious satisfaction there will be on both sides when you as a true penitent and Christ as a true pardoner come together, and enter into a partnership for eternity ! That partnership he will not be the first to break, for whom he loveth he loves unto the end.

## LXI.

The costliest thing in the world is sin. It costs purity of conscience, and costs the favor of God. It will cost at the last the loss of Heaven. The sin of grieving the Holy Spirit has cost many a one everlasting perdition.

## LXII.

It will require the opening of the books of remembrance at the judgment bar to exhibit in its completeness the responsibility of individuals in each other's actions. How this partaking in other men's sins will complicate the decisions of that day! How interwoven will be the web of human influence! And how many a sin will wander about that countless multitude of waiting men searching for its real owner, until it fastens on some individual who, for the first time, shall appear to those around him, and perhaps to himself, as having been a thief, or a blasphemer, an adulterer or a murderer!

## LXIII.

We have read of a singular tree that forcibly illustrates the deceitfulness of sin. It is called the Judas-tree. The blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are of brilliant crimson. The

flaming beauty of the flowers attracts innumerable insects, and the wandering bee is drawn to it to gather honey. But every bee that alights upon the blossoms imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth! Beneath this enticing tree the earth is strewn with the victims of its fatal fascinations. That fatal plant that attracts only to destroy, is a vivid emblem of the deceitfulness and deadliness of sin. For the poison of sin's bewitching flowers, there is but *one remedy*. It is found in the "leaves of the tree of life," that groweth on Mount Calvary.

#### LXIV.

Why should any man betake himself to a Saviour, if he does not realize that he needs one, and that there is an abominable and deadly evil in his own heart and life that he must be saved from? When David's eyes had been opened to behold the loathsome depravity of his own conduct, he asks for no compromise, but cries out: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity." He was ready to be thrown like a filthy garment into the caustic alkalies, to be rubbed and maled and beaten until the black spots were cleansed away from the fabric. Such an abhorrence of sin it is the office of the Holy Spirit to produce; therefore should we pray for the Spirit. Such a view of

his guilt it is the office of the minister to bring before every unconverted man; therefore should the minister hold up the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The clearer the view of sin the more thorough is likely to be the repentance. "Ye must be born again," said the Master to his anxious inquirer Nicodemus. But the new birth or regeneration is the production of a new principle in us which is antagonistic to sin as well as obedient to God.

## LXV.

If righteousness must be loved for its own sake, so there is no virtue in avoiding sin simply because it brings a sting in this life and hell in the next. Iniquity must be hated because it is hateful, and God abhors it. Some people avoid certain sins as a house-cat avoids the cupboard for fear of the cudgel of the cook. Holiness is dread of sin; not dread of perdition.

## LXVI.

A man's besetting sin is the one that jumps with his inclinations. Does he love mirthfulness? Then he must be careful lest he run into excessive levity and play the harlequin. He will be tempted to make jests of sacred things. A minister ought not to be a monk; but neither should he be a



social comedian. Does a man love ease? Then he always interprets those Providences in his own favor which allow him to shirk hard work and swing in his hammock. Does he love flattery and eclat? Then he is tempted to seek applause, and to imagine that he is serving God when he is only burning incense on the altar of self-worship. The worst enemy is the one which wears an honest disguise. Look out for *selfishness*. It is the "old Adam" lurking behind every hedge. It will always keep pace with you if you give it the upper hand. Keep no league with it; for Christ will never abide in the same heart with that subtle and greedy tyrant. A Christian is never safe, never strong, never true to Christ, unless he is constantly "collaring" every sinful and selfish passion, and forcing it into unconditional surrender.

## LXVII.

It is not the gale which carries so many on the rocks or the quicksands. It is the silent *under-current*.

## LXVIII.

A man may be crushed by an avalanche, or poisoned by an atom of strychnine; each one *takes* life! And the sin that keeps you from Jesus takes your life for all eternity.

## LXIX.

Repentance is put before faith in God's word. We must abhor evil before we cleave to that which is good. Do you abhor your past sinfulness, and are you ready to abandon your sinful practices, without any exception? This is a question to take precedence of all others. While the love of sin remains, the heart cannot love the spotless Saviour. There is no room for both. God will not accept a corner, and leave to Satan the "chief seats" in the soul. "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye search for me with *all* the heart." It is the compromise with favorite sins which produces shallow conversions, and stunted Christians. Pray for deep conviction, and a thorough uprooting of evil principles and inclinations. A true Christian must not only do a great deal of sincere loving, but also a great deal of honest hating. Doctor Johnson loved "a good hater." Until an awakened sinner so hates sin as to lock it out, he has no room for Jesus to dwell within him.

In this conflict with sin, you will soon find that you can accomplish nothing without the help of the Holy Spirit. Not by your own might, not by your own power, "but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." You must conspire with, and work with, that Divine Spirit. Where he presses you, yield; whither he leads, follow! This demands constant prayer for his guidance. Are you asking this with

all sincerity? In prayer, you ought to go over the whole ground of your weaknesses and wants — as a gardener puts his spade into every inch of the soil in order to clear out the weeds and to break up the ground for the valuable seeds.

## LXX.

The best drainage of a farmer's field is sub-soil drainage. In our churches we need a sub-soil repentance. It must cut deep. It must cut up sin by the root. If the ploughshare run through the flower-beds and melon-patches of one of our self-indulgence, so much the better. The trench that drains off our sins will be a channel for the sweet, life-giving waters of salvation.

## LXXI.

At the close of one of his busiest days of labor, our Lord finds himself on the eastern shore of Lake Gennesareth. He says to his followers: "Let us cross over unto the other side. There is substantially the imitation to every unconverted soul. For there are two "sides" in life — a wrong side and a right side; a side on which Satan reigns and a "Lord's side" where his word is a light unto the footsteps. On one side his guilt and over it hangs the cloud of condemnation. No man can be on both sides, if he try ever so hard. Woe be to him

if his professions place him on the Lord's side, while his affections and his conduct are on the side of the enemy.

Christ draws sharp lines, and allows no neutralities. I do not read of any place in Heaven for neutrals.

## LXXII.

A vague desire to be better, stronger, holier, will come to nothing. Character is built, like the walls of an edifice, by laying one stone upon another. Lay hold of some single fault and mend it. Put the knife, with God's help, to some ugly besetting sin. Stop that one leak that has let so much foul bilgewater into your soul. Put into practice some long neglected duty.

## LXXIII.

The fatal mistake of many people is that they seek for a cheap religion. Some preachers and teachers in their desire to recommend the glorious freeness of the Gospel and the simplicity of faith, hold out the idea that it is the "easiest thing in the world to become a Christian." They hold up very attractively summer religion which is all clear weather and sunshine, and Christianity as a sort of close-covered carriage, in which one can ride for nothing and be safely landed, without too many

jolts at the gateway of Heaven. Very little allowance is made by these rose-water teachers for the stubborn depravity of the human heart, for the tremendous power of the Adversary and for the poisonous atmosphere through which one must fight his way to the "prize of the high calling." Grand old Samuel Rutherford in his nervous, incisive way, says : " Many people only play with Christianity and take Christ for almost nothing. I pray you to make your soul sure of salvation, and the seeking of Heaven your daily work. If you never had a sick night and a pained soul *for sin*, ye have not yet lighted upon Christ. Look to the right marks ; if ye love him better than the world, and would quit all the world for him, then that proveth that the *work is sound*." Probably no writer has ever combined the richest ecstasies of devotion with a more pungent exhibition of the plainest rules of every day morality. The first step toward a genuine abiding Christian character is *repentance of sin*. No man can cleave to his sins and lay hold of Christ with the same hand. No man can turn to the Lord until he has turned his back upon his evil practices and is willing to thoroughly amend his ways and his doings.

## LXXIV.

Christianity is more than prohibition of iniquity, it is the performance of Christ's commandments.

The only way to get sin out of our lives, is to get sin out of our hearts, and the only effectual way to accomplish that is to admit Jesus Christ into our hearts.

## LXXV.

The only effectual repentance is to abandon known sins. The only effectual faith is to begin to keep Christ's commandments with Christ's help. Do not wait for harrowing grief, or some thunder-clap of excitement. Fears do not save a soul. Felix was "terrified," but did not flee to the only Saviour. Religion is not mere emotion of any kind. Saving faith is simply renouncing self, and laying hold on Jesus. Immediate surrender brings immediate salvation. "Follow Me" signifies — go where I lead, and do what I command, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.

## LXXVI.

Repentance is not merely sorrow for past sins; it is abandonment of our own specific sins.

## LXXVII.

The young ruler who came to Jesus with the inquiry on his lips, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" has

always been to me an object of intense interest and sympathy. We are taken with his frankness and our highest expectations are excited that he will, like Matthew and Nathanael, promptly grasp the boon that is offered him. There is something exceedingly touching in the artless *naivete* with which he says to Jesus ; " All these commandments have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet ? " Scores of just such persons are to be found in our congregations, and in nearly every inquiry-meeting we encounter them. They desire to be saved. They have a large " invoice " of goods to exhibit. They have rather fattened their self-esteem by feeding on the rich morsels of their own merits. Having done so much for themselves and by themselves they stand ready to do more yet, provided they can do it in their own way. The Omniscient Saviour read that self-righteous youth to the very bottom ; and he thrust the probe into him until it touched the quick. He knew perfectly well what the ruler's besetting sin was, and just what amputation was required in order to save his soul. Selfishness was that sin. The knife must cut that out, or there was no hope of a life eternal. The prize was magnificent, and the sacrifice must be proportionate. " Give up your possessions and take up a cross for me ! " That was Christ's close and searching test. Nothing less than that. " Follow Me and thou shalt be rich in Heaven. " A glorious offer, but Heaven was a

great way off, and the wealth of this world was just at hand and had possession of the young ruler's *heart*. He did not so much own them as they owned him. If he had been willing to part with them and to cast in his lot with the lowly, persecuted Son of God, he might have been immortal in the same illustrious bead-roll with Peter, the fisher of men, and Matthew, the gatherer of tribute for the King. But alas! he clings to his besetting sin and goes away sorrowful. As the original Greek has it, "he went away *frowning*." Disgust at the hard terms and disgust with himself clouded his brow. The frown which lowered there was a type and a precursor of the heavier frown which is likely to meet him when he stands before that rejected Saviour as his rejecting Judge. Dante, in his "Inferno," pictures this unhappy young man as blown about like a withered leaf in the regions of the lost — "the shade of him who made, through cowardice, the great *refusal*." This describes exactly the condition of thousands. They are offered a great salvation on the simple terms of quitting their own favorite sins and their own self-righteousness, and doing God's will. The issue is sharp and distinct. It is yes or no. The pressure of the Divine Spirit upon your conscience is to let go your sin and cleave to Christ. One or the other you must give up. You cannot keep both. The young ruler could not serve Christ and Mammon.



## LXXVIII.

An earnest, resolute setting about the work of repentance, and of seeking God, seldom fails.

## LXXIX.

Saving faith is not an opinion ; it is a transaction by which the believing soul joins itself unto Christ Jesus, who saith unto such a soul "I am thy salvation." The stronger the faith is, the more stable and serene is the sense of security which the believer feels. Spurgeon has happily observed that faith is the milk and assurance is the cream which rises on it ; the richer the milk the more abundant the cream. Faith is life, although it may be a very feeble life in many hearts. On this April day the little modest arbutus may be about the only flower peeping out after the exit of the winter ; but it is the substance of things hoped for, when warmer suns will have brought the wealth of June roses. The life which Jesus imparts is the main thing ; having that, every believer should aim to have this life more abundantly. A higher degree of faith will bring more vigor, and joy, and conquering power, and these will bring clear, strong assurance.

Peter possessed some measure of faith when he cried out to his Master from the boisterous waves "Lord, save me." The Holy Spirit had given him

a far higher attainment of knowledge and soul-trust, when he proclaimed in the market-place of Jerusalem, "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Saul of Tarsus had an infant faith born within him when he was groping about the house of Ananias at Damascus. The infant was crying for the light and had not yet received the full inpouring of the Holy Spirit. But the infant had grown into a giant when Paul the veteran reached up to the eighth chapter to the Romans, and could shout "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, angels or principalities or powers, things present or things to come, nor height or depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This was full assurance. Paul had the witness of the Spirit that he was a saved man in Christ. There was an inward conviction and an outward life, and the two were correlated as root and tree-trunk; they both corresponded to the Holy Spirit's description of the true Christian as revealed to us in the Word. When a tree produces the leaves of the cherry, and the blossoms and fruit of the cherry, we are confident that it is a cherry-tree. When a man possesses a trust in Jesus and a love for Jesus in his soul, and honestly endeavors to keep the commandments of Jesus, he has the witness of the Spirit that he is a child of God. He is one of the

family. He has passed from death unto life. The curse has been taken away, and there is no condemnation resting on him, because he is in Christ Jesus.

## LXXX.

It is not every faith that saves the soul. There may be a faith in a falsehood which leads only to delusion and ends in destruction. When the Eddystone lighthouse was to be built, Winstanly, the noted engineer, contracted to rear a structure which should withstand the assaults of time and tempest. So confident was his faith in the showy structure of his own skill, that he offered to lodge in it with the keeper through the autumn gales. He was true to his word. But the first tremendous tempest which caught the flimsy lighthouse in the hollow of its hand hurled both building and builder into the foaming sea. We fear that too many souls are rearing their hopes for eternity upon the sands of error, when the testing floods come and the winds beat upon their house it will fall, and sad will be the fall thereof.

Faith is simple and entire reliance upon something or somebody.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," was Paul's answer to the most important question that human lips can utter. Not in Christianity but *on* Christ. It is not

enough to believe *in* the Christ described in the New Testament. Millions of unconverted people do this, just as they believe in Wilberforce as a noble philanthropist, or Lincoln as an unselfish patriot. But these, whose judgments assent to Christ's wonderful beauty of character, do not entrust their souls to him as an atoning Redeemer. They do not rely on what he has done for them, or promises to do. They do not put themselves into such spiritual connection with him that they draw from his divine life their own inner life, as a grape cluster draws its substance from the vine. When the miner looks at the rope which is to lower him into the deep mine, he may coolly say to himself, "I have faith in that rope. It looks well made and strong." That is his opinion, but when he grasps it and swings down by it into the dark, yawning chasm, then he is believing *on* the rope. This is more than an opinion; it is a voluntary transaction. The miner just lets go of his foothold and bears his entire weight on those well-braided strands of hemp. Faith is the cling to the rope, but it is the rope itself which supports him. When a human soul lets go every other reliance in the wide universe, and hangs entirely upon what Jesus has done and can do for him, then that soul "believes *on* Christ." To him that believer intrusts himself for guidance, for pardon, for strength and for ultimate admission into the exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

## LXXXI.

Faith is a sensible act. Do you consider it a sensible thing to purchase a United States government bond? Yes; because it gives you lien on all the resources of the great republic. So the highest exercise of the reason is to trust what the Almighty God has said, and to rely on what he has promised. Infidelity plays the idiot when it rejects God, and pays the penalty. Faith is wise unto its own salvation. Faith is salvation; unbelief is suicide.

Faith is a stooping grace. That heart-broken, self-despising woman weeping on the feet of her Lord, is a beautiful picture of lowliness and submission. Self must go down first, before we can be lifted up into Christ's favor and likeness. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Pride and self-righteousness were biting the dust when Saul of Tarsus stammered out, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do." It is an accursed self-conceit which prevents thousands from becoming Christians. On the low grounds falls the fertilizing rain of heaven; the bleak mountain-tops are barren. God resisteth the proud and giveth his grace to the lowly. Faith links us to omnipotence.

## LXXXII.

A clipper ship crossing the Banks of Newfoundland, in heavy weather, strikes an iceberg. She

settles rapidly at the bow, and her captain and crew have barely time to leap into the life-boat. The question, "What must we do to be saved?" is answered by their prompt leap into the life-boat, which is an act of faith. They trust their lives to it for salvation. From immediate death they are saved. But after the ship has sunk the crew are still out in the deep and dangerous sea. There is a second process necessary. In order to keep out of the trough of the sea and to reach the distant shore, they must stick to the boat and pull lustily at the oar. They must "work out their salvation" now by hard rowing. But this is a continued process of salvation, day after day, until they reach the shores of Nova Scotia. Never, for a moment, however, are they independent of the life-boat. That must keep them afloat, or they go to the bottom. At last, after hard rowing, they reach the welcome shore. This is the third, final and complete salvation; for they are entirely beyond any perils of the treacherous sea. Now they are at rest, for they have reached the desired haven.

### LXXXIII.

Faith and Action have been the source, under God, of everything good, and great, and enduring in the Church of Christ; the very church itself exists through them. The early apostles went with their glad evangel to the nations, under this

double impulse, and with this double watchword. It was not enough to "believe my gospel," they were also to "preach my gospel." It was not enough to love in the heart; the whole life was to be an embodiment and outflow of love. It was not enough to have a meek and gentle spirit; the young church was to return good for evil, and thus overcome evil with good. The church was not only to be sound in heart, but active in limb and sinew also. It was to be a militant church, contending earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints—a courageous church, standing fast for the gospel—a suppliant church, praying without ceasing—a busy church, redeeming the time—a patient church, bearing with all long-suffering—and a conquering church, to evangelize all nations. Its model men were men of faith and action. Through that apostolic Iliad, the great apostle seems to fly like a thunder-bolt, kindling and consuming! At Lystra rebuking the deluded worshippers; at Jerusalem confronting the Pharisee, and the rulers on the castle-stairs—at Cæsarea startling Agrippa on his tribunal—at Rome preaching the reviled gospel, both in his "own hired house," and in Cæsar's palace—he is everywhere the believer in full action, with the heart to feel and the hand to do. And such have been God's true evangelists ever since. Such were Baxter, the indefatigable pastor, Edwards, the perpetual thinker, Neander, the perpetual student,

Owen, the perpetual writer, Knox, the untiring reformer, Whitefield, the untiring preacher, and Chalmers, who appears to have been pastor, preacher, writer, thinker and reformer, all in one.

A faith sound as that of the Westminster Assembly will not save the dying world around us, unless it flows out into action.

#### LXXXIV.

In Great Britain no shipmaster is permitted to use an anchor which has not been tested and stamped with a government mark. If we wish to know whether our faith has the King's mark on it, we must examine his Word. A spurious faith, full of flaws, cannot be relied on in a hurricane. The metal of our faith, so to speak, must be from God's Scripture-foundry. It must be lowered with entire trust upon God, and not upon ourselves. It must fasten itself to the everlasting veracity, and power, and love, of the Almighty. Every link in the chain cable is a divine promise. When in the darkest night we heave out this anchor we may wait confidently for the dawning of the day.

#### LXXXV.

Faith has its telescopes by which it penetrates into the unseen worlds as distinctly as the tubes of the astronomers take observations of the transit



of Venus. The holier our lives, the clearer will be our spiritual vision. Sin blurs and bedims the glass. If the heart be "single" to the glory of God, and longs to do his will, our whole being shall be "filled with light."

## LXXXVI.

God often strikes away our props to bring us down upon his mighty arms. What strength and peace it gives us to feel them underneath us! Far as we may sink we cannot go further down than those stretched arms. There we stop; there we rest; and the everlasting arms not only sustain us, but carry us along, as on eagle's wings. Faith is just the clinging of my weak soul to the Omnipotent Jesus. Its constant cry is,

I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.

## LXXXVII.

The pathway of life has many a lion in it, and our success and happiness depend very much on the way we deal with them. Nearly all the strongest men in our cities had to encounter early poverty and hardships; their limited education was got at the cost of self-denial and with no little trouble, but learning was all the sweeter when they found it in the carcass of the slain lion. Had there been

no Samson in all such young men they would have been frightened by discouragement into a helpless obscurity. One of the Christian leaders in New York tells us that he never has found greater enjoyment in his fine library than he found in the second-hand book which he purchased with his first shilling and read in his father's rustic cabin. Every good enterprise has its lions. Things that cost little, count little. When a handful of *lignum-vitæ* Christians undertake to build up a mission school in some wretched neighborhood, or to build a church in some destitute region, they find difficulties "roaring against them" like the wild beast in the vineyard of Timnath. These obstacles endear their work to them. There is a spiritual enjoyment in the after results of their hard toils that they never could have known if their work had been easier. One reason why the Gospel is valued so little by luxurious dwellers in large cities is that it costs them nothing to get it. A sermon heard in a frontier clapboard church (whose erection cost sharp sacrifice) after a ten-mile ride over a country road, has some honey in it to a hungry Christian. Reader, did you ever face a lion in undertaking the spiritual reformation of some hardened sinner? And had you ever a sweeter banquet of soul than when you saw him sitting beside you at Christ's table? . . . Life's sweetest enjoyments are gathered from the *victories of faith*. Out of slain lions come forth meat; out of conquered

foes to the soul come its sweetest honeycombs. One of the joys of Heaven will be the remembrance of victories won during our earthly conflicts.

## LXXXVIII.

The real essence of faith is the entire letting-go of self, and the cleaving to Jesus only. To put self clean down, even to the abandoning of any self-righteous idea of saving ourselves by prayer, church-going, or any other good act, is essential to a right trust in Christ. In homely phrase, you cannot hang your hope on two hooks at once. Nothing on myself; everything on Christ—must be your motto.

## LXXXIX.

The man who is climbing the Alps must not look too far ahead, or it will tire him; he must not look back or he gets dizzy; he has but to follow his guide, and set his foot on the right spot before him. This is the way we must let Christ lead, and have him so close to us also, that it will be but a short view to behold him.

## XC.

No vessel can sink or founder with Jesus on board. No struggling soul, no struggling church, no struggling work of reform, ever went down when

the Son of God had set his divine foot within it. Let the storms rage, if God sends them. Christ can pilot you through. Let the midnight hours of darkness come, if Jesus only comes through them with the hailing signal, It is I! There may be a night coming soon on some of you, when heart and flesh shall fail you, and the only shore ahead is the shore of eternity. If Jesus is only in the bark, be not afraid. Like glorious John Wesley, you will be able to cry aloud in the dying hour, "Best of all, Christ is with me! best of all, Christ is with me!"

### XCI.

This divine doctrine of trust is a wonderfully restful one to weary disciples. It takes the tire out of the heart. As the infant drops over on its mother's bosom into soft repose, so Faith rests its weary head on Jesus. He giveth his beloved sleep, so that they may wake up refreshed for their appointed work.

### XCII.

When four rowers are in a boat, with their backs toward the bow, their simple office is to pull the oars. The steersman's office is to look ahead and work the helm. The moment that the rower turns steersman and tries to look over his shoulder or outpull his fellow oarsman, the boat loses headway.

So you and I are placed with our backs to the future. In our hands are the oars of Christian endeavor. Let God steer the boat and let us attend to the oars. The sweetest thought to every true believer is this — My Master is at the helm. He knoweth the way that I take. My times are in his hand. It is not in me to direct my steps. His grace is sufficient for me. I will trust.

## XCIII.

Faith without works is dead. We may be in the life-boat, but the life-boat is not Heaven. There is many a hard tug at the oar, many a night of tempest, many a danger from false lights, and many a scud under bare poles (with pride's top-hammer all gone) before we reach the shining shore. To the last moment on earth our salvation depends on complete submission to Jesus. Without him, nothing; with him, all things.

## XCIV.

Some unquestionable Christians worry themselves out of all peace and usefulness by a torturing habit of questioning their own faith and the reality of their own conversion; they count the beats of their own pulse until they get to be morbid hypochondriacs.

Brother, if you have taken Christ at his word,

and surrendered your soul to his keeping, and your life to his ordering, do not lie awake one moment about your title-deed to Heaven. Go about your life-work, and do it as thoroughly and conscientiously and cheerfully as Christ enables you by his imparted grace. He is responsible for you just as long as you *abide in Him*.

## XCV.

Faith is cleaving to Christ. The value of it is not in the mere act of cleaving, but in the glorious sufficiency of the One to whom we cling.

## XCVI.

Assurance of salvation by the Son of God is no modern discovery. It is not a new invention, "patented" by any school of Bible students. It is as old as the Cross of Calvary.

## XCVII.

"He that keepeth my words loveth me." If we look carefully into this short sentence we find it epitomizes both faith and works, both the inward heart and the outward conduct. Love is an emotion of the heart. It is an inward affection and a principle. To love Jesus requires a change of heart. No unconverted person in his native state

of depravity loves Jesus Christ. The beginning of a trust and love for Jesus is the first work of conversion. And the *proof* of such a heart-love is to be found in the endeavor to keep Christ's commandments. / In other words, the obedience to what Jesus says to us is the grandest and strongest evidence of the new birth. / If we sincerely love our Redeemer we will cherish his words and live and act in constant submission to his will. To have the very words of the Son of God carved as it were upon our consciences and then to carve out the daily life in conformity and likeness to these heavenly injunctions, this is the very *beau* ideal of true religion. He who attains nearest unto that has reached the "higher life." /

## XCVIII.

Loyalty to the principles of God's Word, loyalty to the everlasting right, must be embedded in the conscience and control the conduct, or else we drift upon the rocks. It is not strength of intellect that saves a man, or the surroundings of society, or alliance with a church, or even orthodoxy of belief. All these have proved but cables of straw attached to anchors of clay. We must have conscience taught of God and held by God, or we drift upon the lee shore. God never insures a man except while his anchor is fastened to the divine principles of right, with the cable of practical obedience. .

## XCIX.

Obedience is the crowning grace of a follower of Christ. Nay, it is the very essence of holiness.

## C.

Prompt obedience honors God. Prompt obedience puts the soul immediately within the Almighty hold. Prompt obedience *saves*.

## CI.

When Jesus calls, your salvation depends on prompt obedience. It was short work with Peter when Christ said to him "Follow Me." Again was it short work with him when he was sinking in the waves and cried out "Lord, save me." It was short work with the Philippian jailer when he heard Paul's directions and threw himself into the Saviour's arms on the spot. All the Bible narratives (except that of Nicodemus), describe a prompt action where salvation was secured. Prompt obedience puts you into the omnipotent hold of Christ, and none shall be able to pluck you out of his hands. Prompt obedience *saves*!

As long as you refuse to yield to Christ, he cannot reconstruct your heart, any more than you can liberate a canary-bird which refuses to come out of the cage-door, and which flies back as often as you



take it out. God has endowed you with the power of choice. You are a responsible moral agent; and if the Holy Spirit offers to renew your heart, you must yield to him, or be lost.

## CII.

True godliness of life and the true enjoyment of life both depend upon a hearty, conscientious obedience to Christ's commandments. No man can possibly serve two opposing masters. |

## CIII.

The essence of all piety is obedience to God. It is the eternal law of right put into daily practice.

## CIV.

Sin can make us suffer, but it never can give us solid satisfaction. It can torment, but it cannot tranquilize.

Obedience to Christ is a wonderful tranquilizer. *Rest* to a true Christian is simply the unhindered permission to do his perfect will. Dam up a clear, swift-flowing brook, and it foams with anger; pull away the obstruction and it joyfully darts along its bright course wherever its silver feet shall lead it. Peace is not dull stagnation; it is the deep strong current of a soul flowing in harmony with God.

Until the soul throws itself down submissively before Christ, ready to accept and *obey him* — come joy or sorrow, come pain or pleasure — there can be no conversion unto eternal life.

## CV.

Conversion is rather a planting time with a soul than its “harvest.” It is a beginning of better things ; not a consummation completed.

Conversion is the act of joining our hands to the pierced hand of the crucified Saviour. The new life begins with the taking Christ’s hand and his taking hold, in infinite love, of our weak hands. All the strength which any converted soul possesses is gotten through this contact and union with Christ the Omnipotent.

It is not the opinion, it is the *act* which saves your soul.

## CVI.

Life is a series of steps. Each step counts. Coming to Jesus is a single step. It may be the work of a moment. It may turn on a small pivot.

When Jesus commands a soul to follow him, he furnishes not only the test of faith, but the touchstone of character. These two are comprehensive words — “follow me” — were Christ’s most com-

mon formula to those yet outside of the kingdom. They were at once his awakening appeal; his direction to the inquiring heart, and his "confession of faith" and rule of daily conduct.

## CVII.

Conversion is essentially a change of heart. Sometimes it is described as a change of ownership. God comes to a wayward, disobedient man, and in a tone of authority and love says to him, "My son, give Me thy heart." God addresses this short sentence, one of the weightiest ever uttered both as a demand and an invitation. He has a right to make the demand, and his infinite love prompts the invitation. In the human body the heart is the central vital organ. By the play of its valves as by the play of a piston-rod, all the blood in the system is sent coursing through veins and arteries, from head to foot. Once in every four minutes each drop of blood passes through this central organ. The strokes of its piston reach one hundred thousand in every twenty-four hours. The currents driven forth at every stroke carry heat, activity, and vital force to the furthest extremity of the frame. From this wonderful bodily organ the work is transferred to the mental and spiritual nature. That inward power which drives the current of thought, feelings, affections and volition is called in the Bible, the "heart." It really means

the whole inward life. If God gets the heart completely he gets the whole man. Give me thy heart, means, give me thyself.

### CVIII.

Do not say you cannot regenerate your own heart. God's spirit can. He offers to do it. He pleads with you to let him do it. Coöperate with the loving and all-powerful Spirit. Pray for his help. No farmer pretends that he can control such forces of Nature (or Providence) or sunshine and rain, but he can and does coöperate with these forces, by plowing and sowing in the due season.

You cannot control God, but you can let him control you, and that is all he asks.

### CIX.

If the owner of a garden allowed it to be overgrown with nettles and Canada thistles, he may well say that his garden is a dead loss. When a human soul grows such weeds as selfishness, and covetousness, and pride, and enmity, to Christ, it is a lost soul. A future continuance of this condition would not be Heaven, it would be Hell. But if the garden were cleansed of the weeds, and made rich with vegetables and fruits, and fragrant with flowers, it would be saved. Precisely this

process of rescuing a human heart and human life from the worthlessness of sin and devoting it to the obedient service of God, is what is signified by conversion. Unless the soul is thus converted it cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. King Charles — the Stout — sent a messenger to Notke, a pious abbot, to inquire how he should save his soul. The messenger found the abbot working in his garden. "Tell his Majesty," said Notke, "to do just what I am doing. Tell him that he must pull up his vices, and begin to grow such graces as God requires."

The foremost duty of every one of us is to *save our souls*. To gain the whole world would be a wretched equivalent for the loss of a good conscience, the favor of God, and everlasting life. The soul must be first.

## CX.

Go into a vast iron foundry, and witness the extraordinary processes by which fire conquers the solid metal until it consents to be cast, or stamped, or rolled into the form which the artificer desires. This is a type of God's moral foundry, where an obdurate heart is first so softened as to feel the truth; then to weep over sin; then to be ductile and malleable; then so flexible as to be "formed anew" into a shape that pleases the Lord Jesus Christ. This melting process is wrought by the

Holy Ghost. Just what the fire accomplishes in the foundry the infinite Spirit of love accomplishes in a convicted soul.

## CXI.

Oh, how rich God is! He does not need to copy himself. He loveth to please his own sovereign skill. Some hearts he opens with the gentlest touch of his love; others he pryeth open with the heavy bar of arousing judgments. Some sinners are sweetly and quietly won to Christ; others are driven to him through the hail-storm of threatenings and the thunderings of an upbraiding conscience.

## CXII.

Many a genuine conversion has been attended by anguish of deep conviction and the rapture of a sudden joy, but we doubt whether a majority of the best Christians now living had precisely this experience. For a sinner *to wait* for such an experience or to *demand* it from God before he will obey the divine voice is both madness and presumption.

## CXIII.

There are few startling religious experiences recorded in the New Testament. There is, indeed,

one case of awakening which has much that was dramatic in it—the case of the jailer at Philippi. There was one most extraordinary conversion, as by a lightning flash, on the highway to Damascus. Paul was the most extraordinary human character in the Early Church. His regeneration was accomplished by some wonderful phenomena. But if there had been no other awakenings recorded except the one by an earthquake, and the one by a “light from Heaven” and a supernatural voice, we ordinary people might be perplexed and discouraged. We might be left to wait—and to wait in vain for something “sensational” to come upon us.

Instead of that, we find that the spiritual transformations described in the New Testament were commonly produced in the most quiet normal way—by calm appeals to the reason and the conscience.

#### CXIV.

Many Christians cannot fix the precise date of their conversion. The new life came to them just as the dawn comes—darkness slowly giving place to steel-gray, and the steel-gray to silver, and the silver reddening into ruddy gold—and all this done so quietly and so steadily that we were unable to fix the precise birth-moment of the day.

## CXV.

“With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness.” This is only another way of saying that a man is justified before God by faith alone, and saving faith is an act of the heart. Belief in Bible truth is not enough. Trust in the divine testimony is not enough. Faith, in order to secure our salvation, must go down to the roots of the heart ; it must take hold of the affections, subdue the will, and change all the tastes, desires, and purposes. Faith is really the act of trust by which one person (the sinner) commits himself to another Person, who is the Saviour. A personal relation springs up between you and Jesus Christ. You surrender your self-will and agree to submit to his will ; you surrender the sins that you have loved in order to please him ; you accept his commandments as your rule of conduct ; you consent to Christ’s reign in your heart. Christ then begins to *live* in your heart. A vital union is thus made between person and Person, between your soul and your Saviour ; this *union* is the very core and kernel of saving faith. This constitutes true conversion.

Bear in mind that the heart is the fountain-head, and the cleansing, purifying, changing work must be done there. If that fountain be full of new and godly affections and desires, it will cut a channel for itself, and flow out into a stream of daily religion. The fuller the fountain, the larger the



stream. The reason why many church-members carry such a small "head of water" is that the heart-fountain is so wretchedly scanty. You cannot draw a river of godly activities out of a bucketful of love to Christ. The fountain must discharge a strong current in order to cut a deep channel and to keep it full-banked with a steady stream. Conversion is the Holy Spirit's change of the fountain-head. The channel-cutting is public confession of Christ. Keeping the channel full is the life of godliness.

## CXVI.

Genuine conversion brings the soul into a living connection with Christ. He is the Vine, we are the branches; and as the flow of vital sap is essential to the verdure and the fruitfulness of each tendril, so must the Christian draw his daily supply of strength from him who is the Life.

## CXVII.

There is a right way and a wrong way of looking at almost everything. To a man who has no eye for beauty, one of Claude's landscapes is merely so much paint and linen canvass; to another it is a master-piece of golden sunlight, bathing field and forest with its glory. . . The difference between the thoughtless sinner and the

same person after he is converted is, that he looks at Christ with a new eye, and sees him to be the very Saviour that he needs.

### CXVIII.

How am I to feel and what am I to do, if I become a genuine Christian? What are solid evidences that I have come into the fold?

Search yourself honestly, thoroughly; dig down deep, clear down under mere emotions, and lay your foundations on the solid rock. To shed tears, to "rise for prayer" in a meeting, to go into an inquiry-room, to feel happy, are not in themselves Bible tests of regeneration. Our Lord struck down miles deeper than all these when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The new birth is the beginning of a new light. The prodigal son in the parable had been dead, and was alive again.. Being "found" and coming to life are described as the same thing. If you are alive, you ought to know it.

Then probe yourself with such close questions as these: Have I begun to hate the sins I used to love, and have I given up the practices which the Bible and my conscience condemn? Do I pray earnestly to be delivered from all sin, and watch against it? Have I submitted my will to Jesus Christ, to let him rule me and own me, and guide

me? Do I distrust myself entirely, and trust Jesus Christ only? Do I feel a real satisfaction in doing right and trying to please God? Have I begun to feel such an interest in others that I want to do them good? While the Holy Spirit is working on me, do I work with the Holy Spirit? Do I honestly endeavor to live as I pray?

If you can give the sincere "yes" of your conscience and your conduct to such questions as these, you cannot be mistaken in regarding yourself as a converted man or woman. These are Bible-evidences, and when the Scriptural *die* answers to the stamp on the *coin* of character, then there is a "witness of the Spirit" that the work is of God. If you find such evidences as these, then you may thank the Lord with all humility that Jesus has found you, and that you have found Jesus. The Shepherd knoweth his sheep, but so does the sheep know his Shepherd, *and followeth Him.*

## CXIX.

Conversion is a process somewhat similar to what is seen on May-day in our towns—when houses change occupants. A converted heart banishes its old tenant, Satan, and welcomes its new tenant, Christ Jesus. A thorough cleansing is needful ere the Lord of purity will condescend to make it his dwelling-place. Every room must be

purified, and set apart to a new use. Memory must introduce its store of Scripture-truth, and open its record-book of mercies. The imagination must take down its sensuous and impure pictures, and adorn the walls with those copied from the Great Master. Into the inner chamber of the affections, faith must come and set up her household altar. The windows of that room should open towards the sunrising. The key of this inner apartment in every regenerated heart belongs to the blessed Jesus. "I will come in, and sup with thee, and thou with me" — are the gracious words with which he often enters.

### CXX.

Just as a liberal father establishes his son in commercial business by furnishing him a certain sum for his capital, so our Heavenly Father gives the new heart as a Christian's capital. This is the starting point. As soon as converting grace enters the soul, its condition changes. At that moment, by that act, the seeking sinner becomes the forgiven, the accepted, the adopted heir of God. And the religious principle then implanted by the Holy Ghost is the spiritual capital with which the new-made heir begins his stewardship. Sometimes this capital is furnished in childhood or in early youth, and then a long "threescore and ten" witnesses the growth of that soul into vast possessions

Sometimes a person begins late in life ; and then like those who mistake their secular callings and only get hold of the right occupation at forty, he seldom becomes a spiritual millionaire. In fact, he does not get far beyond his original capital. It is hard work to make a first-class Christian out of an aged sinner. Old habits of sin have become inveterate. The best soil of the heart has been worn out in growing enormous crops of tares. There is a want of spring and pliability in an old man's temperament ; he does not readily adapt himself to new positions and new duties. As the merchants who have accumulated the most gigantic fortunes are commonly those who began to be rich before thirty, so the richest Christians are usually to be found among the converts of the Bible class and the Sabbath school. God reserves the highest reward to those who enlist the earliest and serve the hardest and longest.

### CXXI.

Christ is the purifier of the heart. He who walks in constant fellowship with Jesus hath the clean heart and the holy life. And an active, prayerful, loving mind, teeming with busy plans of usefulness and swarming out into deeds of daily beneficence, is a hive of blessings, not only to its possessor, but to all who partake of its stores of honey.

## CXXII.

He can never be rich towards God who despises a penny-worth of true piety. Holiness is just the living to the Lord in the least things as well as the greatest; for graces can only be gathered *one by one*.

I count this thing to be grandly true ;  
That a righteous deed is a step toward God,  
Lifting the soul from its common clod  
To a purer air, and a clearer view.

Heaven is not reached by a single bound  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit *round by round*.

## CXXIII.

Instead of picketing the whole road to Heaven by sharp prohibitions, the Word of God puts faith at the entrance gate, and lines the pathway with the rewards of obedience, and makes crosses turn to crowns, and keeps in view the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Before us ever walks our Lord and Master. His winning command is, "Learn of me." His promise is that we too shall be anointed with the oil of gladness, if we *turn to righteousness and abhor iniquity*. And to those who fulfil these two tests an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto Heaven.

## CXXIV.

Holiness is constant agreement with God. It is the agreement of love deeper even and sweeter than the most unbroken wedlock. From this harmony of soul with the Divine Will flows a great deep, broad river of peace, which passeth all understanding and fathoming. This stream grows deeper and wider until like an Amazon it empties into the ocean of eternal love. The holy believer who accepts God's promises more readily than the best government bonds, who shapes his life in conformity with Christ, who keeps his soul's windows open towards the sun-rising, who makes even a cross the ladder for a climb into a higher fellowship with Jesus, who realizes that just before him lies the exceeding and eternal weight of glory — cannot be made a sour or peevish or melancholy man by any outward circumstances.

The holy-minded Rutherford of Scotland, wrote most of his immortal "Letters" within the cell of a martyr's prison. They read like leaves from the tree of life, floated down on sunbeams. "Come, O my well-beloved!" he exclaims; "move fast, that we may meet at the banquet. I would not exchange one smile of Christ's lovely face for kingdoms. There is no house-room for crosses in Heaven. Sorrow and the saints are not married together; or if it were so, Heaven would divorce them." The holiness of such a man is not the

enthusiasm of a visionary or the mere outburst of transient emotion; it is the normal condition of the man; the wholeness of a soul that has been transformed by grace into the likeness and the life of Jesus Christ. Keeping Christ's commandments keeps the eye clear, and the temper sweet, and the will submissive, and the affections pure; in these lies the rich reward.

Purity of soul is like purity in gold, where the hottest fires turn out the most refined and precious metals from the crucible.

### CXXV.

The road to Heaven is full of obstacles. They lie right across every sinner's path; and like the ice-floes around the boat, they will not remove themselves. And the reason, my unconverted friends, why you are not Christians to-day, is that you have not yet pushed away these obstacles. An energetic young man who starts life with a pile of hindrances at his bow, understands that the battle of life is to smash through them. David Livingstone, when a factory-boy and fastening his school-books on his loom to study Latin, was practising this process. Afterwards on reaching Africa, the natives of the coast, looking at his English trousers, say jeeringly, "This Englishman hides himself in bags to look stout; he will soon give out." The taunt fires Livingstone with fresh determination,



and he plants the signal-lantern of the Gospel in the heart of Ethiopia.

Persistent push is indispensable to your salvation. The Bible has so much to say about "looking back" and faltering and "drawing back to perdition," because its author knows the weak points in human nature. To enter into the strait gate requires striving. To overcome obstacles requires might in the inner man, and that comes from the Holy Spirit. Doctor Spencer tells us of a man who once came bursting into his inquiry-meeting in almost breathless excitement. The poor man had been walking back and forth between his own door and the meeting, until at last he said, "I am *determined* to go into that inquiry-room or die in the attempt." In that fierce fight with a wicked heart, he not only had to call on God's help, but he said afterwards — "If you expect God to help, you must be perfectly *decided*."

The Bible makes much of determination. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. Quench not the Spirit. Escape for thy life. All this style of admonition and direction shows that the sinner has a host of obstacles between him and Heaven; and he must push his way through, or perish forever. Do sinful associates hinder you? You must turn away from them, or stop your ears to their ridicule. It is better to stand the laugh of fools in this world

than the frown of God in the next. There is not a hindrance in your path that cannot be swept away at once, if you are but determined, and will but invoke the aid of the almighty, all-loving Jesus. What won't move, can be made to.

## CXXVI.

Beauty is that combination or harmony in color or in form that gives pleasure to the eye of the beholder. One of the profoundest prayers in the Bible is that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us. One of the richest promises is that "The meek will He beautify with salvation," and the loftiest ideal set before us, is the "beauty of holiness." When our eyes gaze upon our enthroned Saviour in his celestial splendor, then shall they "see the King in his beauty." It was the ineffable perfections of Jesus of Nazareth which constitute not only the glory of the New Testament, but furnishes the most unanswerable argument for the essential dignity that was clothed in human form.

## CXXVII.

There is a right time as well as a right way to be saved. And that is the time when the Saviour calls us. His call is always immediate; i. e., he never appoints a certain day in advance; and when

that day is reached we are to repent and believe on him. The only adverb he employs in his invitation is *now*. He is so careful to keep us from any reliance upon the treacherous to-morrow that he never allows salvation to be possible for us except "to-day." Oh, that lying, cheating, stealing, soul-killing to-morrow! How many has it seduced into hell!

## CXXVIII.

Your time is *to-morrow*; God's time is *to-day*. Unless you can agree to his time you are lost.

The omnipotence of the loving Saviour is never pledged to any man who clings to his sinful ways, or to his self-righteousness, or to his delusion that to-morrow will be the best time to repent.

Christ's invitations and commands are all in the *present tense*. To-day he says, "Come unto me, and ye shall have life." If you persist in refusing him, the dread day will surely come when he will say "Depart from me!"

## CXXIX.

Every Christian in the world *is* a Christian simply because he accepted Christ when he was offered. Every impenitent sinner is yet one because he *chooses to be*.

The salvation of every soul is to be settled

directly between that soul and the atoning Jesus. Any person or thought that comes between that soul and its Saviour is a fatal impertinence.

## CXXX.

The true thermometer of the Church, to indicate its spiritual temperature, is the weekly gathering around the mercy-seat. A cold prayer meeting marks a cold church. It is at once the cause and the effect of spiritual declension. A prayer meeting "below freezing point" is a fatal indication.

What the steam cylinder is to the engine, that is the prayer meeting to the Church.

## CXXXI.

Prayer is the soul's telegraph. Our messages go to the Intercessor with the speed of thought, swifter than the lightning. The blessings asked for are often sent with the promptness and velocity of the Divine love. Like Daniel, we have the coveted answer at once. Sometimes the answer is delayed. Then is it our duty to pray on and to wait; for prayers are not commands, they are petitions. Sometimes the reply comes in the shock of an unexpected trial; it comes like a death-message over the wires. Yet it was not sent by accident or mistake. The Master knows what we need the most, and faith can only sob out "Nevertheless,

Master, not as I will, but as thou wilt." If I put my soul into connection with Christ in fervent, believing prayer, I am only responsible for *my* end of the celestial telegraph, and not for that end of it that lieth in the bosom of the redeeming love.

There is just as clear an exercise of faith in receiving a denial or a trial without shrinking, as there is in laying a petition before God.

### CXXXII.

That God is the hearer of prayer who shall dare doubt? The sceptic here must seal his vision "lest he come to light" and be persuaded. He must mutilate most sadly the narrative of God's providential dealings. He must erase from his Bible the animating record of Jacob's midnight struggles, the thrilling scenes of Elijah's wrestlings on Carmel and at Zarephath, the "evening oblations" of Daniel, and the angelic deliverance of Peter from the prison-cell. He must even give the lie to that Ineffable Witness who descended himself from the upper sanctuary, and had there beheld the gracious reception of his children's prayers, and who has said to all trembling, sorrowing, doubting saints—

"Ask, and ye *shall* receive; seek, and ye *shall* find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," was the reply.

## CXXXIII.

One cleansing of a soul at the time of regeneration will no more keep a Christian forever pure, than a single ablution of his face or form would make his body clean for a life-time. The world soils our souls every day. Each unholy thought, each angry word, each act of deceit, each covetous touch of gold, each insincere, unbelieving prayer, each cowardly desertion of duty, leaves an ugly spot. "Create in me a clean heart" is an every hour's prayer for a Christian's whole life.

## CXXXIV.

God does not give us ready money. He issues his promissory notes and then pays them when faith presents them at the throne. Each one of us has a check-book. Just as every note of the Bank of England represents just so much bullion in its vaults, so a Christian's promises represent "the unsearchable riches of Christ." His assets are infinite. When we get bankrupt in duty, we sometimes talk as if the divine grace had "suspended," or "broke;" but the failure is with us. We do not go to the throne and present the promises for help. Jesus never repudiates; he longs to give more than we have faith to ask. If half the time spent in worrying over our troubles were spent in seeking God's help, we should sooner get relief.

## CXXXV.

Every true life of faith has scenes in it when help comes—as it did to Elijah at the brook Cherith—from an unexpected quarter. The raven lights at our feet with food, and the dry brook begins to sing again with water. I do not believe that there is such a thing in the universe as a neglected prayer ever breathed by docile, submissive faith. Emptied of self, I am sure of being filled by Jesus.

## CXXXVI.

In drawing a check at the bank we never put anything on the face of the paper but the sum of money we require. Faith should be equally simple and concise when it “draws” on the Giver of all grace.

## CXXXVII.

In spite of seeming discouragements we are never to grow faint in praying. An honest, persevering faith—a faith that works for the very object that it is praying for—a faith that holds on in spite of rebuffs, is the faith that conquers. For genuine faith creates such a condition of things that it becomes wise for God to grant what might otherwise be denied.

The Bible fairly blazes with the record of tri-

umphs won by prayer. It was while that prayer band in the "upper room" at Jerusalem were pleading with the Mediator that the baptism of heavenly fire descended. Peter's friends could not consent to give him up to a bloody death without one more effort at the mercy-seat. They made it; and he walked right into their prayer meeting a living witness to the glorious truth that God honors persevering faith.

### CXXXVIII.

God is a supreme and glorious Sovereign up on his great white throne. We are responsible free agents down here on his footstool. As a sovereign he has commanded us to pray—to continue in prayer, to pray without ceasing. He reserves to himself the right to grant or to refuse the specific thing we pray for. It is our right to pray, and it is God's right to bestow just such answers as his all-wise love may deem to be for the best. We would define faith to be that child-like temper of the soul which submits implicitly to everything which God *orders*, but never submits to *what God can better*. If we give up to discouragements when we ought to battle against them—or if we submit to the absence of spiritual blessings without an earnest endeavor, and a wrestling for them, then are we wretched clods who deserve to suffer the worst that can befall us.



A loving Father sits at the upper end of the telephone; if we do our duty at this end, the response will soon come back — “Be it unto you even as ye wish.”

## CXXXIX.

Depend upon it — that heart is in a dreary and dangerous state which has not had any visits from the lowly Jesus for many a long day.

A closet whose hinges are rusty, and whose cob-webbed silence is seldom broken by the voice of secret prayer, will soon be a haunted place for evil spirits to hide in. “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.”

## CXL.

Morning is the golden hour for devotion. . . .  
. . . If stony Egyptian *Memnon* made music when the first rays of the light kindled on his flinty brow, a living Christian heart should not be mute when God causes the outgoings of his mornings to rejoice.

## CXLI.

The bell-rope of fervent prayer reaches up to the throne. Let us pull that bell in our time of

need, with a strong hand. When thou hast pulled it boldly, wait till the blessing comes.

## CXLII.

Whatever David's own experience may have been, he furnishes a golden prayer for universal use in these pregnant, pithy words: "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."

## CXLIII.

A Christian church is not a social club; it is a Heaven-appointed institution — a band of Christ's redeemed followers, united for his worship for their own spiritual edification and for the upbuilding of the Lord's kingdom. Admission into a church is not a whim, or a temporary arrangement. It involves solemn vows and personal duties and permanent obligations. The relation is not general, but specific. What would be thought of that soldier who should claim to belong to the United States Army, but was never seen at the drill or the quarters of his own regiment? <sup>or</sup> Nor can any man or woman claim to be a loyal member of his or her church who never answers to its roll-call of duty, who neglects its services, and shirks its responsibilities and a proper participation in its worship and its work.

The rolls of our churches are encumbered with

too many spiritual "deadheads," whose tie to the church is a brittle thread. Commonly their tie to the Lord Jesus is about as brittle and worthless. Having no root in any specific soil, they do not grow in grace; having no pasture, they are not fed; having no chosen province or post of duty, they become as homeless as tramps and as useless as drones. On the other hand, the vigor, the joy, the usefulness, and the power of every Christian depend largely upon his faithfulness to his own church. His spiritual roots are there; his influence casts its shadow — larger or smaller — there; the fruits of the Spirit which he yields are a part of the vintage of that particular vineyard. Such members are the delight of their pastors. "Brethren," exclaimed grand old Pastor Paul, "my joy and crown! so *stand fast* in the Lord, my beloved." Every minister soon comes to know who are his minute-men, as well as who are his dress-parade members, and who are the shirks. X In the Theban army was a "Sacred Battalion," three hundred strong, who had sworn a solemn vow to stand by each other and their standard until the last drop of their blood was spilled. These were the men for a close encounter or a desperate charge.

*oln.* The leader of every effective church knows his sacred battalion. They are the weather-proof Christians who consult conscience instead of the barometer on Sundays. If the minister can turn out to preach, they can turn out to hear him; a

sensible sheep always knows where he is salted. The prayer gathering is their spiritual home — for home is where the heart is. To such members hard work is a privilege, not a penance. Their church has its right place both in their affections and in their check book. When the roll is called they always answer "Here!" Some one asked Doctor Lyman Beecher, during the golden days of his Boston ministry, how he accomplished so much. His ready answer was, "It is not I, but my church. I preach on Sunday, and four hundred faithful members preach all the week." It is not the leader, but the sacred battalion who carry the enemy's redoubts.

Happy the minister who finds his sacred battalion at their posts, ready for the burden, the bivouac, or the battle. Faithful is the minister who can recall the deserters, and bring new recruits to the standard of King Jesus.

#### CXLIV.

Every true and timely moral reform should be born and nursed, and reared and supported by the Church of Jesus Christ. There is not a single moral precept which sinful humanity needs, but the Church should teach it; there is not a wholesome example to be set, but the Church should practise it. That Christian church is the most *Christ-like* which does the most to "seek and to save the lost."

## CXLV.

Some men's boughs hang over on the church side of the wall, but their *roots* are on the world's side. Such bear nothing but leaves.

## CXLVI.

In a well organized army every man has his place. The mathematical head goes to the engineer corps. The medical skill and steady hand are assigned to the surgical department. The sharp-eyed man shall handle the Enfield rifle; and the well-taught graduate of a half-dozen hard fought fields receives the sword of a brigadier. He who has most of Napoleon in him soon fights his way to the supreme command. A Wellington or a Scott would not be more out of place in the ranks than would a Paul or an Apollos be in spending their precious time in teaching the children of a mission school to read the alphabet. "Every man in his place" is as much the motto of the *Church* as it is of the camp.

## CXLVII.

The presence of Christ can be traced in a church as the presence of a stream of water can be traced in California during the summer. Where the irrigating stream is carried there is a belt of emerald.

## CXLVIII.

Christ never promises smooth water to his followers. Nor is his Church a vast assemblage of tow-boats, pulled along by the sheer power of the Divine Will. Each Christian has his own oar of personal responsibility to pull, and his own rudder of conscience to steer with, and must "work his passage" as a free agent.

## CXLIX.

The religion of Jesus Christ is an experimental thing — something to be tested by practical results. It claims an actual relation between sinful man and his Heavenly Father; between the sinner and his divine Saviour. The salvation of any sinner depends on his vital spiritual union to the Lord Jesus.

Religion is not guess work. Every one who becomes Christ's actually "knows whom he believes."

## CL.

One of the most substantial evidences of growth in grace is that a man more and more loves to obey Christ and comes to relish even the wholesome severities of duty. It is equally true that in order to make high attainments in religion, we must love righteousness. We must love it because it is

comely and is pleasing to God. There is a great difference between the boy who drudges through his dry lessons in natural philosophy because he is driven to it, and the boy who is so enamored with physical science that he has a laboratory up in the garret, and makes electrical machines of his own out of old glass jars. Such boys make the Faradays and the Edisons. A bright youth in my Sunday-school spent his first pocket money in buying pigments and brushes. To-day he is winning gold medals in the Salon of Art in Paris. "I had hoped," said a young man to D'Alenbert, "that my paper would have given me a seat in the Royal Academy." "Sir," replied the great philosopher, "if you have no higher motive than that you will never get a seat there." The man who keeps Christ's commandments simply for selfish objects, does not keep them, for the essence and flavor of all holy actions lie in loyalty to Christ and to right for its own sake. The moment that any religion becomes the mere tug and strain of enforced obedience, all the godliness has gone out of it. Adoption makes children, not slaves. Love of Christ is the only consecration.

## CLI.

True religion is imitation of Christ; the true Christian is a follower of Jesus. Following implies continuity. The train is not merely attached to

the engine ; it pursues the same track over which the engine leads.

Following implies obedience, for no soldier can follow his commander unless he obeys orders. It also implies imitation. "Learn of me," says the Master, and, as the scholar who would be a good penman keeps his eye on the copy, so the Christian must keep his eye on his Model. Jesus as a Divine Saviour died for me ; but Jesus as a loving man teaches me how to live. And there are two characteristics of the man Christ Jesus — given in the first chapter of "Hebrews" — that furnish the surest tests of piety. It is there said of him that he was exalted above his associates because he *loved righteousness* and *hated iniquity*. Let not my reader be repelled by the word righteousness, as if it had here a theological meaning and described the penal satisfaction which the Redeemer made to the divine law when he died for us. It simply and honestly means the being and doing what is just and right. And the word iniquity signifies whatever is crooked ; whatever is twisted out of the right line. Our common word is wrong — *i. e.*, what is *wrung* out of its straight direction. A lie is twisted truth. Fraud is a wringing out of shape of the eighth commandment.

In these days we not only need to emphasize a sound doctrine, but sound practice, for piety is a Bible-creed crystalized into Bible-conduct. Back of the conduct must lie a purified heart. Figs do



not grow from thistles. Create in me a clean heart must go before all the rest, for out of the heart are the issues of life. The inward fountains of life must be cleansed and the will must yield its helm to the commands of Christ. Sagacious Paul describes it as "putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The evidence of this "new man" is to love right and to hate iniquity.

## CLII.

If those who sneer at practical religion would only seek it for themselves, and make a fair trial of it, their lips would be sealed to scoffs, and only opened in grateful praise. I never heard of a sincere Christian who pronounced Christianity an imposture or a failure. . . . The only satisfactory test of Christianity is the test of personal examination and personal experiment.

## CLIII.

Like the treacherous signal boats that are sometimes stationed by the wreckers off an iron-bound coast, the shifting systems of false religion are continually changing their places. Like them, they attract only to bewilder, and allure only to destroy. The unwary mariner follows them with a trembling uncertainty, and only finds out where he is when he

feels his ill-fated vessel crashing into a thousand fragments on the beach. But how different from these floating and delusive systems is that unchanging Gospel of Christ, which stands forth like the towering lighthouse of Eddystone, with its beacon blaze streaming far out over the midnight sea ! The angry waves through many a long year have rolled in, thundering against that tower's base. The winds of heaven have warred fiercely around its pinnacle ; the rains have dashed against its gleaming lantern. *But there it stands.* It moves not. It trembles not ; for it is "founded on a rock." Year after year, the storm-stricken mariner looks out for its star-like light as he sweeps in through the British Channel. It is the first object that meets his eye as he returns on his homeward voyage ; it is the last which he beholds long after his native land has sunk beneath the evening wave. So it is with the unchanged Gospel of Christ. While other systems rise, and fall, and pass into nothingness, this Gospel (like its immutable author) is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. While other false and flashing lights are extinguished, this, the "true light," *ever* shineth.

#### CLIV.

The theory of all Redemption has its mysteries ; the practical part of our religion which is trusting and obeying a Redeemer, is no mystery.

## CLV.

True religion is simply following Christ. The more closely our modern churches conform their standards of doctrine to this brief, vital core, truth, the more orthodox will they become, and the less will they be rent into factions and distracted with schisms. The true "Evangelical Alliance" will always crystallize around Christ's person as the one only leader, and Christ's cross as the one only ground of salvation.

## CLVI.

A religion built on selfishness is worthless. The sinful *heart* is the real citadel; until that is surrendered unconditionally, no blessing comes, no sunshine breaks, no new life for God begins. No compromise with sin can ever be accepted by the all-holy Jesus; and no conversion can be genuine which does not radically change both character and conduct.

## CLVII.

Hardly any simile describes character better than that of a fabric made up of innumerable threads, and put together by numberless stitches.  
. . . . . A great many poor, slazy fabrics have a smooth and substantial look, but in the wear

of life they betray the weak spots and ravel out. Some people also are not stoutly sewed; they are only basted. When the warp and woof of character is weak and worthless, when it is badly rotted by sin there are two methods of repair. The one is to patch up the old; the other is to discard it altogether and procure an entirely new fabric. The first is man's plan; the second is Christ's plan. The fatal objections to the first method is that a patched character does not look well, and will not last. Harmony is a prime essential of beauty, and a bright strip of virtue pieced in upon a godless life only makes the rest of the fabric look more unsightly. Nor is there strength enough in the fabric to hold the incongruous patch. Christ's method of dealing with human character is the only thorough and successful method. He says, *Behold, I make all things new*. If any man be in Christ and Christ in him, he is a new creature. . . . The supreme gift of the Lord Jesus is a *new character*. The Apostles never wasted a moment on a gospel of patchwork. Their twofold text was "turn to the Lord," which meant repentance, and "cleave to the Lord," which meant a life of faith and holiness.

#### CLVIII.

God's grace is the only original source of the light that makes any man a luminary in society.

And when a man has once been kindled at the cross of Christ, he is bound to *shine*. Neither natural heart or stone tower are self luminous. A hand from without must bring them light.

## CLIX.

Every Christian should dare to be singular. It is of little account to be judged of man's judgment; he who judgeth us is the Lord. We are members of society, and bound to contribute our very utmost to its benefit; but we do that best by remembering that our first allegiance is to that Society whose leader is Christ. We *report to headquarters*. The first question with me as a Christian, is, What does my Master command? Would he approve my mode of doing business, my style of living, my amusements, my temper, my whole daily conduct? If so, that is enough.

All the people who make a marked success in life and who achieve any good work for God, are the people who are not ashamed to be thought singular. The man who runs with the crowd counts for nothing. It is when he turns about and faces the multitude who are rushing on to do evil that he commands every eye. Then by a bold protest he may "put a thousand to flight." So the young monk, Luther, turned about and faced the hosts of Papacy. His heroic "No," nailed on the church door of Wittenberg, aroused Europe

from its delusive and deadly dreams. Standing alone, he was enforced by the Almighty.

I seem to see the burly Reformer as he came to that spot, three hundred and sixty years ago, with the immortal theses in one hand and his hammer in the other. He does not dream himself what results are to come from that simple deed. With sturdy strokes he sends home the nails, until the ring of that hammer begins to startle Germany out of the slumbers of the Dark Ages. Germany has never gone back into that nightmare of superstition; but Protestantism on the Elbe and the Oder is *not* broad awake to-day. That hammer needs to ring again.

### CLX.

Unpopularity should be to us a guerdon of praise when it is visited on a man for conscience's sake. There is often more honor in a pillory than a throne.

### CLXI.

Every true child of God is a citizen of Heaven. Our homestead is on high. A part of the blood-bought family are there already, and every day witnesses the home-coming of thousands more. Only a thin veil separates me from the multitudes around the throne; when death drops the

veil, I am there ! Here on earth I am but a pilgrim—a transient lodger, for this is not my rest. Here we who are Christ's have no continuing city ; we are seeking for and pressing towards the magnificent city that hath foundations whose builder is the Almighty. A wondrous comfort does this thought bring to us amid the discomforts and the sharp trials on the road. This life is only our training-school to purify us and make us more "meet" for the heavenly community among whom we expect to dwell. The best citizens of this Republic are those whose lives are loyal to the higher law which God has written in his Word. No statute is fit to be enacted which contravenes God's truth ; and that professed Christian is a coward and a traitor to his Master who does not carry his religion into his politics as much as into his business pursuits or his household.

"If ye love me," said our loving Redeemer, "keep my commandments." The world around us has its unwritten code of morals and of manners. It sets up its standards and fixes its fashions to suit itself. But they are no rule for you and me ; Jesus has "chosen us out of the world," and given his own life to be our standard and our pattern. Every consistent Christian's motto should be—I must live *for* this world, and yet not be *of* it. Daniel did his best service for wicked Babylon by keeping his windows open towards Jerusalem, and by loyalty to its everlasting King. This world never will

be converted by conformity to it; but it will be overwhelmingly impressed by the sight of a vast body of people who should live and speak and act as the *citizens of Heaven itself*. What a salt would our influence be; what a power would our example be; what a trumpet our every word!

Let every Christian assert his high birth by his high bearing. He is never to stoop to anything low, never to be caught at contemptible tricks, never found in suspicious places. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so much higher should a Christian's ways and words and whole conduct be above the ways of sinners. He should never "apologize" to the world for daring to do right.

## CLXII.

"How did Roger Sherman vote?" inquired Mr. Jefferson once as he entered the hall of Congress, while a question was being taken; and as the story goes, he recorded his own vote on the same side, without knowing much of the merits of the question itself. This was a high tribute to the good sense of the Connecticut shoemaker, and proved him to be a man for others to steer by. Now it is not improbable that our Saviour had reference to the same thing in morals when he told his disciples that they were "cities on a hill." The idea seems to be something more than mere conspicuousness. When the Great Teacher first



pronounced this memorable comparison of a good man with a conspicuous city, his eyes may have been looking to the ancient town of Saphet, which stood upon a lofty elevation, high above the waves of Galilee. It was in full sight and seen from afar. It was as if he had said, "Ye are like yonder city of Saphet, set upon a hill." That city is always there, always in one place, lifting its white domes to the morning sun, and flashing back his evening rays from its high battlements. It is an object to take the compass by — an object by which the traveller from Syria and from Lebanon may guide his steps. The fisherman, as he pushes his light shallop over the placid bosom of Genesaret, knows which way to steer his little craft, for yonder looms up Saphet, the "city on a hill." The dwellers hard by knew which way was north, and which was south, by looking out towards the lofty city. It was *always* on its hilly throne. So it is with a man of Bible principle. He is a moral Saphet. Other men can steer by him. Other men often judge of the wisdom or rightfulness of things by the position which he occupies. He is on a hill — firm, well-established, not seeking to be conspicuous, but yet *not ashamed to be seen*. It requires a sound conscience to be all this. It requires grace. It requires holy and consistent living. This controlling and directing godliness of character "goeth not out" but by much prayer, watchfulness, self-denial, and careful walking with God.

## CLXIII.

If there was not another person on the globe but myself, I ought to be a Christian for my own sake. Life is only pure when it is under God's control; life is only happy when we can enjoy communion with God. Death is only safe when it is a departure "to be with Christ which is far better."

## CLXIV.

While riding across the hot and parched valley of the Jordan, you have ever in your eye a luxuriant belt of foliage; it marks the course of the river itself. That thick growth of oleanders, tamarisks, and other trees is "planted by the waters and spreadeth out its roots by the river;" the leaves are ever green, and have no dread of the drought of summer. So is it in travelling over the barren plains of Nevada; whenever you descry a belt of willows and alder-bushes you safely prophecy a watercourse.

What the root is to a tree, the heart is to a Christian. Both are invisible; but external signs show plainly where they both are, and what they are about. Dryness below ground soon signifies deadness above ground; dryness in the heart soon reports itself in the daily conduct.

A thorough-going Christian draws his motives of

action from his deep heart-love to his Master. Up through these roots of affection come his faith, his prayerful spirit, his zeal, and his staunch devotion to the true and the holy. The double office of a root is to hold and to feed. Such a man is held firm against sudden gales of temptation. Such a man never falls off into spiritual declension. Jesus holds him, and Jesus sends currents of spiritual strength into his life as the sap of a fruit tree percolates to the outermost twig. As long as the soul reaches down into Christ and draws its supplies from Christ, there is little danger that the leaves will wither. Some professors wear a very dingy and dusty look ; they are powdered all over with worldliness, so that there is no visible verdure. Some very ugly caterpillars build their webs in the dry limbs. Others there are whose leaf began to turn yellow soon after they were set out in the Church. This betrays a lack of spiritual moisture in the heart ; perhaps secret " borers " of sin are at work there killing the tree itself by inches. The leaf tells the story. It is a grievous mistake to suppose that a Christian can be kept fresh, foliage-laden, and fruitful by a mere church-covenant, or dread of discipline, or a respect for " appearances." His inner life must be hid with Christ in God.

The spiritual weather never affects such Christians ; they thrive under every condition of the thermometer and the barometer. Every year is a bearing year. They are *in the habit* of serving

Christ, in the habit of praying, and of delving in their Bibles, and of giving systematically their money to good objects as well as of paying their other debts ; they produce the fruits of the Spirit such as faith, patience, truthfulness, and benevolence, just as my "Bartlett" tree yields its annual tale of juicy pears. Sometimes God shakes the tree by a sudden trial, and then how the fruit does rattle down ! I sometimes think that God gives certain of his people these severe jars, just to show how firm the roots are, and how abundantly the fruit will drop. These are his choice trees ; they are planted close to the rivers ; they do not "see when the heat cometh ;" they are not troubled in the years of drought, neither do they ever cease from yielding abundantly. It is perfectly possible for every one of us to be just such a Christian.

#### CLXV.

Christians are Christ's jewels. They are purchased by atoning blood ; at an infinite price was this divine ownership secured. As the pearls are only won from the depths of the sea by the dangerous dive of the fishers, so were the pearls for Messiah's crown brought up from the miry depths of depravity by the descent of that divine Sufferer who came to seek and to save the lost. The most brilliant and precious gem known to us is of the same chemical substance as the black and opaque

coal of the mine. Crystallization turns the carbon into the diamond. The grace of the Lord Jesus transforms an opaque soul, as black by nature as the jet, into a jewel which reflects the glory of Christ's countenance. All the lustre that the ripest Christian character possesses is but the reflection of that Sun of Righteousness. He who lives nearest to Jesus shines the brightest. The tarnish which makes some Christians no more sightly than a common pebble of the mire, comes from contact with an evil world. A "pearl cast before swine" is not more out of place than is a professed follower of Jesus in the society of scoffers, or in the haunts of revelry.

Not all precious jewels glitter in conspicuous positions. The Master has his hidden ones; there are costly sapphires beneath coarse raiment, and up in the dingy attic of poverty. That self-denying daughter who wears out her youthful years in nursing a poor infirm mother, is a ruby of whom the Master saith, "Thou art mine in the day when I gather my jewels." Many a precious pearl do the Wells and the Wanamakers fish up from the dregs of ignorance into their mission-schools.

"We are his workmanship," said the great apostle; and the lustre of a gem depends much on the polishing. This is often a sharp and a severe process. Many of God's people can recall the times when they were under the terrible file, or were pressed down to the grinding-wheel. Blessed

be the affliction, however fierce, that gives new lustre to the diamond! The Master spendeth no item upon worthless pebbles; only his jewels are polished after the similitude of a palace. Nor is this process only wrought by the divine hand; every Christian must strive to make his or her own character the more shapely and beautiful.

Luther said that there is great divinity in the pronouns of Scripture. "They shall be *mine*, saith the Lord." This claim is founded on the purchase made in redeeming blood. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit confirms it, and every true believer is also self-surrendered to the ownership of Christ. Up to the hour of conversion we had other proprietors — self sin and the devil. Now Jesus says to each Christian, Thou art *mine*, I own thee. I will instruct thee, and polish thee, and put thee where it pleaseth me. I will take care of thy salvation, and no man shall pluck thee out of my hand. Thou shalt be my peculiar treasure in the day of my triumphant appearing. I will place thee in my crown!

What a coronation day that will be! All else on this globe will be but as lumber and rubbish — fit only for the flames — in comparison with his choice ones. Then shall the homeless man of Nazareth come into full possession of his magnificent trophies. The lost in hell will be outnumbered by the saved in heaven. They that curse him in the pit will be far fewer than they that

crown him in the paradise. On the head once bleeding with the thorns will flash the diadem of his imperial glory. And then will all the universe confess that the ransom was worth all its bitter cost of agonies, when the King shall ascend his throne of victory, and be encircled with the constellations of his jewels !

All soul-saving work is a pearl-fishery for King Jesus.

#### CLXVI.

A Christian is the world's Bible. He is the only Bible that the majority of unconverted people look at. They scan the pages closely, and often chuckle when they discover blots and disgraceful records there. It is a terrible injury to a man of the world to have his mind prejudiced and embittered towards the religion of Christ by the inconsistent conduct of professed Christians. The most powerful argument to win a soul to Jesus, is the daily observation of true, brave, cheerful, holy, Christian lives.

#### CLXVII.

A well-built Christian is harmonious in all his parts. He is not a jumble of opposites and inconsistencies—to-day devout, and to-morrow frivolous; to-day liberal, and to-morrow fluent in

falsehoods. He does not keep the fourth commandment on Sunday, and break the eighth on Monday. His philanthropy does not outrun his conscientiousness, nor do his spiritual fervors outrun his inward faith and self-denials.

A living, lovable Christian, is the most powerful argument for the Gospel. He is Christ's best representative.

### CLXVIII.

Sanctification is a genuine and gracious process, and it never reaches completeness in this life. In building a character for eternity, we should regard its impression on our fellow-men; we are as much bound to ornament it with the "lily work" as we are to make the structure solid and enduring. An attractive Christian is the one who hits the most nearly that golden mean between pliant laxities on the one hand, and severe sanctimonious harshness on the other hand. He is strict, but not censorious. He is sound, and yet sweet and mellow, as one who dwells much in the sunshine of Christ's countenance. He never incurs contempt by compromising with wrong, nor does he provoke others to dislike him by his doing right in a very harsh, or hateful, or bigoted fashion.

Our Master is our model. What marvelous lily-work of gentleness, forbearance and unselfish love adorned the massive divinity of life! What he



was, we in our imperfect measure should pray and strive after. Study Jesus. His grace imparted to you, and his example imitated, can turn deformity into beauty and adorn your lives with whatsoever things are true and honest and lovely and of good report. He that winneth souls is wise. But, if we would win the careless and the godless to our Saviour we must make our daily religion more winsome.

## CLXIX.

We wonder sometimes why certain people of our acquaintance shine with such a steady lustre of piety. Their spiritual influences is far out of proportion to their talents or mental culture or social advantages. But the cause of their superior brightness is the same that have made Venus and Mars so brilliant in the evening heavens. While mighty Saturn and Neptune were almost invisible through their remoteness from the sun, the two small planets which revolve close to the source of light becomes luminaries of the first rank. A very humble Christian may become a burning and a shining light in his church, and in society if his orbit is very near to Christ. He reflects Christ in his everyday conduct. It is only as he recedes from the Sun of Righteousness that the Christian becomes either invisible or sheds the baneful influence of a wandering star.

## CLXX.

A true Christian is the representative of Christ in the world—the only embodiment of gospel teaching and influence that is presented in human society. How vitally important is it, then, that those of us who profess and call ourselves Christians should make our Christianity *attractive*! Multitudes of people know very little, and think very little about the Lord Jesus; nearly all the ideas they get of his religion is what they see in those who profess it, and their eyes are as sharp as those of a lynx to discover whether neighbor is one whit the better for his religion.

## CLXXI.

There were two massive pillars in the porch of Solomon's Temple which bore the names of "Jochim" and "Boaz." One name signifies "He will establish," and the other signifies, "In strength." The two together are admirable emblems of solid goodness of character. Not hollow, not easily thrown off their base, and of undecaying material, they typify the firmness and the strength of the man who is immovably fixed, trusting on the Lord. But while these two pillars were made strong, they were also made ornamental; for they were entwined with delicate chains of carved pomegranates and "upon" the capitals of the

pillars was lily-work. Thus strength and beauty are to be combined in every well-developed Christian character.

## CLXXII.

The weakest side of humanity is its moral side. Colossal intellect is often found lodged in the same person with a conscience of mere pulp.

## CLXXIII.

Character is determined by what we love best and labor for most zealously. We judge of the unseen interior by the outcome, just as we judge that there is a bee's nest in a hollow tree if we see bees coming and going from a hole in the trunk. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. God does not deal with actions, but with the heart that prompts them.

## CLXXIV.

A well built life is just the laying up of one grace and good deed upon another ; of faith and patience and temperance and benevolence and courage and self-denial and brotherly love. It is growing in grace. It is the sacred architecture of the Holy Spirit. "Ye are God's building."

## CLXXV.

The best advertisement of a workshop is first-class work. The strongest attraction to Christianity is a well-made Christian character.

## CLXXVI.

Next to Christ himself there is no blessing to the community like a Christ-like Christian.

## CLXXVII.

True godliness is no more to be taken out of business, out of social life, and out of politics, than the leaven is to be taken away from the meal, or the salt is to be barreled up by itself. Christ puts his followers right into this wicked world, and commands them to let their light so shine that men may see their good works and be led to honor God. The Christian who is afraid to mix with his fellow-men lest his godliness be rubbed off, has really but little godliness to lose.

## CLXXVIII.

Good men ought to be put into political stations and make themselves felt in all our civil affairs. They ought to purify unclean atmospheres. Some civilians go into the foul atmosphere of politics,

and preserve their Christian purity, as Theodore Frelinghuysen preserved his in the American Senate, and Wilberforce, Gladstone and Lord Chancellor Cairns have preserved theirs in the British Parliament. Jesus does not mean to take his disciples out of the world, but he is able to keep them from the world's contaminations.

## CLXXIX.

Every good man is God's boon to society.

An eminent banker fell into no exaggeration when he said to a representative of the press, "The most thoroughly useful man New York has known for a quarter of a century was William E. Dodge." His sudden departure was more than local, it was a national bereavement. That broad and beautiful banyan-tree let fall one of its beneficent boughs into Syria, and another among the freedmen of the South, and another into the National Temperance Society, and many another into scores and scores of wide and heaven-directed charities. There are lessons for young men to be gathered from off these beautiful boughs. When a tree rises so high, spreads so widely, and stands so long, it is well to inquire about its *roots*, and what nourished and watered them.

Mr. Dodge was happy in his birthplace and lineage. From the days of Jonathan Edwards, little Connecticut has given more leaders of relig-

ious thought to the nation than any other commonwealth. The boy's father was a man of culture; but the boy himself had no educational advantages beyond those of the Yankee common school, and at fifteen he was the errand-running lad in a Pearl street dry goods store. He swept the floors and took down the shutters every morning; but the best outfit which the homespun lad brought into the great city was the grace of God in his heart. At the early age of twelve he was thoroughly converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and he was fairly "*rooted*" and built up in him and established in the faith.

While many persons who have been regenerated late in life have yielded some good fruit, as from a graft set into an old tree, yet it holds true that the most effective Christians have grown up in Christ from early childhood. The roots of character were not poisoned by long contact with a bad soil.

Young Dodge was a Puritan, eschewing all sensual amusements and entertainments of a questionable character. He soon learned to say "No," and never outgrew the use of that most decisive monosyllable. He continued to be a Puritan to the end of his noble life, but without any sour, severe austerities. The solid rock was well overgrown with fragrant flowers, but the *rock was there*. In an age of increasing laxities on many questions of Christian practice, and exposed to the peculiar temptations of wealth and social prominence, Mr.

Dodge, the man, never outgrew or even diluted the ingrained Puritanism of his boyhood. The world knew him most widely for his munificent gifts of money to innumerable objects; but after thirty years of intimate intercourse with him I was never half so much impressed with his generosity, as by his intense, immovable conscientiousness. So emotional in his temperament that he cried like a child under Gough's stories or Sankey's songs, yet the central trunk of his religion was *conscience*. The word "ought" always gave the casting vote. A God-honoring conscience was the tap-root of his character, and the loss of such a conscience is a sorer bereavement to the country than the loss of his bountiful purse.

The phrase "Christian Worker" is used so freely nowadays in certain quarters that to some it savors of repulsive cant. To Mr. Dodge it belonged rightfully, as it did to Barnabas or Paul. Presiding at public meetings or sitting in boards of Christian benevolence, are the utmost extent of many excellent men's labor; but Mr. Dodge was taught by that master-workman, Harlan Page, fifty years ago, that the true method of winning souls to Christ is by close personal appeal. When young, Mr. Dodge came into Harlan Page's Sunday-school and asked for a class. Page said to him: "Yonder is a bench. Go out and find a class for yourself." That hint lasted a lifetime. During the great revival of 1858 Mr. Dodge was untiring in his per-

sonal labors in inquiry meetings and in his visits to individuals in their homes. . . . Love of Jesus and love of souls were the master-passion of his being. A tree of such broad-limbed beneficence required not only strong and fertile soil, but perpetual watering. There was a perennial verdure in Mr. Dodge's piety and unceasing yield of spiritual fruits, because his roots were moistened by communion with God. His earliest morning hour he set apart for his Bible and his private devotions. And if he came down among his business associates with his face shining with cheerfulness and sunny kindness, it was because he had been on the mount with his Master. No fountain in the public park can rise higher, steadily, than its spring-head ; no man can steadily maintain a pure, forceful life before his fellowmen unless his inner life is hid with Christ in God. The condition of a tree soon reports where its roots are, and what they are about. Dryness below ground soon means dryness above ground. The greater the activity before the world, the deeper should be the secret intercourse of the heart with God. It was not merely in revival seasons and in special spasms of philanthropy that William E. Dodge was recognized. Every year was a bearing year with that grand old Vergalieu-tree. The ground under his boughs always had some delicious bounty for every basket. Pulpits are eloquent only on the Sabbath. Mr. Dodge's "sermons in shoes" were on their errands of



mercy and power on every day of the week. If he was a great merchant he was a still greater minister of righteousness and charity to his fellow-men.

## CLXXX.

They tell us that in Scotland is a battle-field on which the natives of the soil and the Saxons once met in terrible conflict. No monument marks the scene of the bloody fight. All over the field grows the beautiful Scotch heather except in *one spot*. There a little blue flower grows abundantly. No flowers like them are to be found for many a league around. Why are they there? The reason is this. Just in the spot where they grow the bodies of the slain were buried, and the earth was saturated with the blood and the remains of the unhappy victims. *The seeds of these flowers were there before.* As soon as the blood touched them, they sprang up. They developed. And every blue flower on Culloden's field, as it bends to the mountain breeze, is a memorial of the brave warriors who dyed that heathery sod with their crimson gore. So it is with character. The seeds of action lie deep beneath the surface — the seeds of heroism and the seeds of crime. Good and evil germs lie latent in the heart. For a lifetime they may remain unknown and unrecognized; perhaps never are developed in this lower world. The seeds of the blue flowers at Culloden would, prob-

ably, have lain there undetected, to this day, but for the trickling about them of human blood. That called them forth.

## CLXXXI.

Every man has in himself a continent of *undiscovered character*. Happy is he who acts the Columbus to his own soul !

## CLXXXII.

It is not the man who drifts with the current of evil, but he, who, like the sure-anchored rock, stems the current, that is sure to arrest the popular attention and command the popular heart.

## CLXXXIII.

The most tremendous word in the English language is the short, yet mighty word, *No*. It has been the pivot on which innumerable destinies have turned for this world and the next.

## CLXXXIV.

The imagination of man will find its aliment. If high things and pure things are not within its reach, it will condescend to things of low estate. If it is not restrained, it will run riot ; if it is not

elevated by what is holy, it will be corrupted and debauched by what is base.

## CLXXXV.

When men *fall* it is commonly through their unsuspected weakness. When they *stand* it is through the imparted strength of God.

## CLXXXVI.

There laid one great secret of the apostles' power in winning converts to Christ. The *sermons wore shoes*. I honestly believe that one of the chief reasons for the fewness of conversions to Christ is that there is so little preaching for Christ in the daily lives of his professed disciples, and such a fearful amount of direct preaching against him. Actions speak louder than words. The bad sermons of the life are an over-match for the best sermons on Sunday from the lips. Every life is a sermon. Paul himself would not have made any converts to the Gospel of the Cross if he had not proved to the world that "Christ liveth in me." His own heroic and holy life was one of the grandest epistles he ever produced. One great reason for the sad lack of conversions to Christ in our day is, that so many of the sermons in shoes lead the wrong way. A true and noble life is the mightiest of discourses. It is the sermons in shoes that must

convert the world to Jesus, if it is ever to be converted.

### CLXXXVII.

If all who profess and call themselves Christians would simply *live out* their holy professions, the conversion of the world would soon be achieved. If even a single State or a single county were thoroughly Christianized in every home, every school, every place of business, and if Jesus shone out in the domestic, social, and civil life of that whole community, then the whole world would be attracted to look at so beautiful a spectacle. Then the whole world would see what men and women could be Christians *for*. Infidelity would hang its foolish head before such a triumphant argument for the religion of Calvary and the Gospel. But until Christ's representatives live out more thoroughly, the teachings and spirit of their Lord, there will be an abundance of that secret scepticism which steels the human heart against God's glorious Gospel.

It is for this very reason that so much of the headway gained by Sabbath eloquence is lost during the other six days of counteracting influence. One day of good preaching is no match for six days' inconsistent practice. God will never honor his Church with complete success, until it completely honors him.

## CLXXXVIII.

Many a person says in substance, "I am prevented from becoming a Christian by seeing so many glaring faults in church members with whom I come in contact. My standard is high, and they do not come up to it. These people represent Christianity to me, and they do not make it attractive. I do not discover that they are any better than myself, and I make no profession."

You say that there are counterfeit Christians to be found, which is sadly true. Will you take Christianity, therefore, on their false representation of it? Christianity is a divine system of religion, whose code of conduct is to be found in the Bible, whose Founder is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose offers of salvation are based on his atonement, whose spirit and teachings are represented by him, and whose claims on you come directly from God himself. God commands repentance of sin, the reception of his crucified Son into your heart, and an obedience to his pure, beautiful, holy, and life-elevating commandments. What God commands is your *duty*. Yet you practically assert you will not perform your duty to God and your own soul, because some counterfeit professor does not perform his! Would you refuse to pay your note when it became due, because some knavish neighbor had wilfully allowed his note to be "protested?" Will another man's delinquencies, or even his hypocrisies

screen you from condemnation at the bar of final judgment? Christ's offer is made to you ; his claims are laid upon you ; and they are made without the slightest reference to the perfections or imperfections of every other human being in existence. This is not a question between you and your neighbor ; it is wholly and exclusively between you and your God and Saviour.

No one ever takes the pains to counterfeit anything that is not essentially valuable. No one issues counterfeit notes on a broken bank. Do you refuse to receive a genuine "greenback" because certain rogues have issued spurious imitations? There are counterfeit friends, who betray secrets and desert you at a pinch ; but that does not padlock your heart against everybody who does you a genuine kindness. If you can establish the fact that *every* church member is either deluded or a wilful impostor — if you will prove that Christianity, when thoroughly practised, makes its possessor no better, no purer, no more benevolent, no holier, no more lovable — then you are warranted in distrusting it. If *every* note issued is worthless, then the institution is a fraud. . . . .

. . . . . The whole pretence of refusing to accept Christ simply because there are inconsistent or fraudulent professors of Christianity in society, is one of the most transparent tricks with which the Arch-adversary cheats souls out of hope and Heaven. If you are an "outsider" from the king-

dom of God, you are such from your own choice. All the cavils about the shortcomings or the disgraceful delinquencies of unworthy professors, is an excuse thinner than a cobweb. It will not *hold* for one instant in the last great searching day. If you look at yourself with a tithe of the open-eyed keenness that you look at the faults of others, you might well cry out, God be merciful to me, a *sinner* !

## CLXXXIX.

As soon as the heart accepts Jesus, the mouth should confess him, and the life be consecrated to him.

It is a grievous mistake to underrate the duty and the power of a public confession. Genuine conversion demands it ; Christ enjoins it. With the heart man believeth unto justification, and "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (or "in order that we may be saved"). This confession must be the open avowal of Christ before the world. The very idea of "letting your light shine before men," requires a public confession of your Saviour. When I visited a coal-mine in Pennsylvania, and was looking through its dark chambers, I every now and then caught a glimpse of a moving lamp, and I could track it all through the mine. The reason was that the miner carried the lamp on his hat — it was a part of himself, and it shone wherever he went. I said to myself,

would that in this dark world of sin, every miner of the Master carried so bright a lamp to show where he walks! No sceptic can deny the beauty of light, or refute the necessity of lamps.

There are many good reasons why every true convert should make prompt confession of Christ. He owes it to the Saviour who died for him. It is but little that you can do, even at your utmost, for your Divine deliverer; do not begrudge him any service he asks. It will strengthen your convictions of heart. There is danger that the best affections may cool off if they are not allowed to act. If you commit yourself for Christ, he still more abundantly commits himself for you. "Them that honor me, I will honor." "Him that confesseth me, I will confess." Remember also that want of will to confess Christ really indicates a want of heart to believe in him. "If we deny him, he will deny us." An open, hearty avowal of Christ, especially if it be attended with a beautiful and consistent living, has a prodigious influence upon others. It was the sight of the cured cripple at the "Gate Beautiful" which did so much to convince the scoffers at Jerusalem. "Beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." As to your fear that you may not be able to hold out, that depends upon your holding *on* to Jesus. While you are in Jesus' hands, no man — or devil — can pluck you from them. Be sure that you *are* there. No



self-searching can be too thorough, and no heart-probing be too deep, before you join Christ's Church. Public confession without heart-conversion is more than a mistake; it is a pitiable calamity; for if a genuine confession is a fountain of joy, a false confession is a running sore of sorrows and of shame.

### CXC.

In the spiritual world, that professor is but a lean, poverty-stricken starvling, who never gets beyond the infantile condition in which he stood for the first time at Christ's table. Such professors there may be in every church. Their single talent is hidden in a napkin—a very small napkin. What God bestowed upon them at the time of conversion is all that they have now; if there has been any change, it has been rather a reduction than a growth. Such began small—they continue smaller. They never were anything but rivulets, trickling with a slender thread of water among the barren stones, at the mercy of every August drought, and well nigh drunk up by every thirsty noonday sun. Year after year they trickle, trickle—trickle—until death dries them up, and nobody misses them. They watered nothing, they refreshed nobody, and blessed no living thing. Earth is little the poorer for losing them; Heaven scarcely the richer for gaining them.

## CXCI.

The worldling withholds no toil, no sacrifices that are needful to secure his coveted gains or honors. The merchant begrudges not the evenings spent away from his own fireside, if those extra hours over his ledgers will give but an extra dividend of profits. The sculptor counts not the long months wasted, which see him with hammer and chisel pursuing the imprisoned figure which his keen eye detects within the block of Parian marble. And the children of light must carry into their service of Christ the same untiring ardor, the same zeal, and the same self-denial by which the children of the world win wealth and honor and emoluments. Oh, for a holy enthusiasm! a holy covetousness to become rich toward God!

## CXCII.

A growing believer's course is like yonder river's — its birthplace some secluded fountain under the mossy rock. Cool and clear, it steers its modest path whithersoever God shall lead it, laughing evermore and leaping to its own silvery music. For long we lose sight of it. Then we meet it again, no longer a wayside brook, but a deep-voiced river beating against its banks, swelling up to kiss the marge of green meadows — winding around the highland's base — rolling on its majestic march

until it spreads out into a hospitable bay, on whose placid bosom fleets ride at anchor, and in whose azure depths the banners of all nations are mirrored. Such is the outflow of a rich soul—every day widening in influence, every day deepening in experience, every day running purer and purer. To human eyes such believers may move more slowly as old age draws on. But it is because the volume of their graces is increasing, and they are nearing the ocean of eternity. How these lives gladden the regions through which they pass! How they mirror back the glory of Christ's gracious handiwork! How they bear up human hopes, and spread themselves out like broad, patient rivers, to carry all burthens that are launched on their bosoms!

### CXCIII.

The most unpopular doctrine to preach in these times, and the hardest one to practice, is the old-fashioned apostolic doctrine of *self-denial*. This is the grace that pinches. The daily battle of Christian principle is with that artful, subtle, greedy sinner, *self*. And the highest victory of our religion is to follow Jesus over the rugged path of self-denial. This is mainly to be done in the little every-day acts of life.

The great occasions that demand sublime sacrifice are few and rare.

## CXCIV.

This is not an age of heroic Christianity. There is more pulp than pluck in the average Christian professor, when self-denial is required. The men and women who not only rejoice in doing their duty for Christ, but even rejoice in overcoming uncomfortable obstacles in the doing it, are quite too scarce. The piety that is most needed is a piety that will stand a pinch ; a piety that would rather eat an honest crust than fare sumptuously on fraud ; a piety that can work up stream against currents ; a piety that sets its face like a flint in the straight, narrow road of righteousness. We need more of the Christianity that steadfastly sets its face toward Christ's Word and holy will. An ungodly world will be compelled to look at such Christly living as at "the sun shining in its strength." God loves to look at those who carry Jesus in their faces. Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

## CXCv.

The whole methods and results as practised by Christ are just the opposite of those attempted by the world. The policy of the worlding is to get rich by accumulation. The policy of Christ's follower is to get rich by renouncing. Get all you can and keep what you've got is the world's motto.

Christ's maxim is he that is not willing to leave all and follow me cannot be my disciple. It is more blessed to give than to receive. True peace of mind belongs only to the self-renouncing spirit.

## CXCVI.

How often do we ever hear a sermon, or ever think about poor Rizpah? There she sits — in the sacred story — for five long, weary months upon the sackcloth spread on the rock of Gibeah. The noon-day sun pours down its heats upon her head, and the midnight its chilling dews, but they cannot drive her from her steady vigil beside the forms of her two crucified sons. From the early harvests of April to the early rains of October she suffers neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. The wayfarers by the northern road from Jerusalem grow accustomed to the strange, sad spectacle of that heart-broken mother guarding from vulture and jackal the remains of her beautiful Mephiboseth and Armoni.

Those two youths were crucified; there seems but little doubt of that. They were sacrificed to appease the wrath of the Gibeonites for the cruelties once practised upon them by the hands of their father, Saul. If we could ask that long-enduring woman, Rizpah, what enabled her to stand those five months of severe strain, her answer would be

in one single word, *Love*. It was the quenchless affection of a true mother's heart. It transcends every other earth-born affection. It can neither be "chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude." This was the chord that bound Rizpah to that long vigil on the desolate rock, and stood the tremendous strain.

There is a lesson for every Christian in this touching episode of the *mater dolorosa* on the rock of Gibeah. There is only one principle in the human heart which can withstand the severe strain which the daily wear and tear of temptation and trial bring upon us. It is *love for Jesus*.

Love of Jesus is essential Christianity. It endureth all things; it never faileth. No privations can starve it, and no burdens can break it down. It keeps the heart of the frontier missionary warm amid the snows of the Rocky Mountains, and gives sweetness to the crust which the overworked seamstress eats in her lonely lodging—disdaining the wages of sin. It is the core of *all* the piety which Christ loves to look at. It is the only cure also of the reigning worldliness, and covetousness, and fashion-worship which have made such spiritual havoc in too many churches.

The test-question for every Christian life is—Have I in my inmost heart a love of Jesus strong enough to *stand the strain*? My religious profession has lost its novelty; will it hold out? Tempta-

tions will come ; shall I conquer them, or break ? Christ demands constant loyalty ; can I be true to him ? Am I as ready to stand watch day and night to protect his honor as poor Rizpah was to protect the lifeless forms of her beloved from the birds and the beasts ? These are the questions that touch the very marrow of our religion. They underlie all our heart-life, our church-life, and the very existence of every work of self-denying charity.

My brother, there is only one way to be a *staying* Christian, a thorough, soul-saving Christian. It is to get the heart full of Jesus—so full that the world and the lusts of the flesh and the devil can get no foothold. Whether you are a pastor longing for a New Year's blessing on your flock, or a Sabbath-school teacher set in charge of young immortals, or a parent guarding the fireside fold, or a philanthropist toiling for the ignorant, the suffering, and the lost, you need this ever-living mainstay and inspiration. If you only love Jesus you will love to live for him and to labor for him. Jacob toiled seven years faithfully for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love which he had to the beautiful maiden in the fields of Laban. Love's labors were light. Would you then be a lightsome, joyous laborer in Christ's vineyard ? Get your heart full of him. Would you be a power in your church ? Get the heart full of Jesus. Would you be kept safe from backsliding ? Then keep yourself in the love of your

Saviour. Put that master affection so deep down that it shall underlie all selfishness ; so deep that the frosts of the current scepticism cannot reach it ; so deep that the frictions of daily life cannot wear upon it ; so deep that the power of temptation cannot touch it ; so deep that even when old age dries up the other affections of our nature, this undying love shall flow like an Artesian well.

Look at that steadfast Rizpah watching beside the crosses of her crucified sons. She *stood the strain* — until her noble constancy won the King's eye and secured their honorable burial. There is an infinitely holier Cross, an infinitely Diviner sacrifice that demands our steadfast loyalty. If a mother's love could endure so much, what will not the love of a redeemed soul bear for its Redeemer? Oh, for a fresh baptism of this mighty love! A fresh and a full inpouring, so that no accursed spirit of the world, no temptation, no self-indulgence, no — nor any other creature shall be able to *separate* us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## CXCVII.

There are a great many times in our lives when our "strength is to sit still." Motion is good in its time, but so is meditation, so is quiet study, so is a patient waiting on God. If a bucket is to be filled from a spout of water, the best place for that



bucket is to keep it under the stream until it is full. We soon run empty of grace, and need replenishing, and need to be "*filled unto* all the fulness of God."

The cry of the hour is for more work. But genuine work consumes strength. The most laborious farmer must halt his team occasionally at the plow and rest; he must go in from the hot harvest field and sit down at his table and refresh his weary frame. An army is never in so good a trim for service in battle as after a sound sleep and a morning meal. So every servant of Jesus must often recruit his spiritual strength by sitting down at his Master's feet, in prayer, in meditation, in reading Christ's words and thinking about them. The disciples were not losing time when they sat down beside their Master and held quiet converse with him under the olives of Bethany or by the shores of Galilee. Those were their school-hours; those were their feeding-times. The healthiest Christian, the one who is best fitted for godly living and godly labors, is he who feeds most on Christ. Here lies the benefit of Bible-reading, and of secret prayer. The very act of sitting down quietly with our Crucified Redeemer at his table of love, has its signification.

Let us not forget either that to be instructed we must come often to the feet of Jesus. The transcendent truths of the atonement and the new birth were revealed to Nicodemus when he was

sitting as an inquirer beside the Great Teacher. The woman of Sychar found a well-spring of truth while she was listening in the hot noonday to a person who told her all things that she had been doing in her shameful past. We need just such discoveries about ourselves. There is spiritual education in contact with Christ. When he says to us, "Come unto me," he does not only mean that we must come for forgiveness and salvation, but also for instruction and for communion.

There are two sides in the best-developed Christian. There is a *Martha*-side which is employed in benevolent activities, in teaching others, in going about doing good. Some Christians over-do this side, and neglect the other side. They keep on the go in a ceaseless round of excitement. They do not enough develop the *Mary*-side of character—or that habit of self-study, prayer, reflection and heart-converse with their Lord. With such there is a tendency to noise, hurry, worry, and to superficiality. Shallow brooks are noisy; there are stiller waters that run deep, and do not run dry. The busiest and most benevolent Martha must often take Mary's place at the Master's feet, both to learn his will, and to drink in his Spirit. We do not read much about Paul's quiet hours or secret devotions; yet he must have had constant, close fellowship with his Lord, and deep meditation and soul-fillings, or he never could have stood the strain or the drain of his public

achievements. All the most effective men, the Augustines, Bernards, Luthers, Bunyans, Edwardses, and Paysons, have drawn their strength and inspirations from secret communion with their divine Lord. When at the feet of Jesus, these mighty men were little children.

In our hours of sorrow there is no place for consolation like that in which we feel his everlasting arms put under our heads. Oh! how his arms do *rest* us! How soothing to lie where John did on that bosom of infinite love! There is room for all of us there. We can hear him saying, "Let not your hearts be troubled. My peace I give unto you. Where I am, ye shall be also. If ye abide in me and I in you, ye may ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The last lines that Frances R. Havergal ever wrote, express the longings of the soul that sits at Jesus' feet, and looks up into his countenance :

I am so weak, dear Lord, I cannot stand  
One moment without Thee ;  
But oh, the tenderness of Thine enfolding !  
And oh, the faithfulness of Thine upholding !  
And oh, the strength of Thy right hand —  
That strength is enough for me.

I am so needy, Lord ! and yet I know  
All fulness dwells in Thee ;  
And hour by hour that never-failing treasure  
Supplies and fills in overflowing measure,  
My least, my greatest need. And so  
Thy grace is enough for me.

## CXCVIII.

There was one spot on earth which Jesus seems to have especially loved. It "was his wont" to go there. As John was his favorite disciple, the family of Lazarus, his favorite household, Galilee his favorite water, so Olivet his favorite mountain. An Oriental city, with its crowded and filthy streets, could have no charm for such a spirit as his. When duty called our Lord into Jerusalem, he went there; but as soon as he could escape from its din he bent his footsteps over the Valley of Kedron to the quiet Mount of Olives. It afforded him a blessed asylum from noisy traffickers, churlish scribes, and insolent Pharisees. Olivet always treated him kindly. Olivet cast no stones at him. Her ancient trees gave him cool shelter from the noonday heat and the heavy night dews. Her flowers talked to him of their Creator—Jesus—and her verdant turf spread a couch for his weary limbs.

Every Christian should have his Olivet also. If Jesus needed an Olivet for quiet communion and prayer, surely his earthly followers need one still more. No Christian can afford to live constantly in the whirl. Daniel needed to have an Olivet in his chamber amid Babylon's sins and impiety. Peter found his on a housetop in Joppa. Let every child of Jesus resolve that he will have a place and a time for meeting his dear Master

alone, and he will go forth from such holy interviews with his face shining and his strength renewed. Our Olivets will prepare us for that mount of heavenly glory, when we shall see Jesus as he is.

## CXCIX.

A soul that is rooted into Christ will thrive like a tree planted by the rivers of water. The leaves shall not wither, and death will only be a transplanting into glory.

## CC.

Christ is the secret feeder of a genuine believer. The life that springs from him is pure. The difficulty with many Christians is that they let the stream of their affections run through ploughed fields, and alongside the dirty highway and through foul thoroughfares until the current becomes fearfully muddy and feculent. A clean fountain requires clean channels to keep the waters sweet and transparent.

## CCI.

There is a wonderful restfulness for worried hearts in this single assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway." This may be called Christ's richest and sweetest promise.

## CCII.

The essential of purity of heart is to keep the evil *out*. This requires constant vigilance. For a Christian to maintain an intimacy with the ungodly is like letting a company of carousers into his house. They will leave their ugly marks on the furniture — their odors of evil drinks and noxious fumes in the air — and the recollections of their poisonous talk in the memory. A heart is known by the company it keeps. No secret sin ought to have a “night-key” to its doors. No wicked practice should have access at its back-windows. Many and many a sly temptation will present itself at the door decently clad “in the white robe,” and with a smooth word on its tongue. The dangerous sins are those which are “genteelly dressed.” Wherefore the Master solemnly cautions us to watch with prayer. Blessed is that servant whom, when the Master cometh, He finds *watching* at every door and window.

## CCIII.

“It matters little how the head lies, so that the heart is right towards God,” said Sir Walter Raleigh to the executioner who asked him to lay his head properly on the fatal block. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life — is the command of Him who created the soul, and

knows all its mysteries. As a good home requires careful housekeeping, so a good life requires careful heart-keeping.

## CCIV.

There is an old Jewish legend — found in the Talmud — that King David's harp was kept hanging over the royal couch. During the night the north wind sometimes blew over the strings, and they vibrated with sweet and solemn music.

A more wonderful instrument than any which Israel's Psalmist ever struck, is carried in the human breast. Upon its "ten strings" the hand of God often strikes, and evokes most sublime melody. The one hundred and third Psalm was originally played upon this *harp of the heart*. Its key-note is "Bless the Lord, O my soul! let all that is within me bless his holy name." At another time the strains of that harp were inexpressibly plaintive and mournful. They were like the wail of a sick child. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness. Against thee have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

This harp of the soul is what the Apostle refers to when he exhorts his brethren to "sing and make melody in the heart to the Lord." In order to produce this spiritual music, the heart must be in

tune. It must be pitched to the same key with the will of God. When the soul is in harmony with God, and gratitude or love sweep the chords, O what glorious melodies they roll forth! The remembrance of mercies and the anticipations of heaven blend together. Every string — penitence, faith, love, joy, hope — vibrates in unison, and the whole soul becomes an instrument of praise. When the heart is thus in tune, it is delightful to let the song out from the lips. When a whole congregation of worshippers are in such a frame, then “let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!” Such music is a rehearsal for Heaven’s oratorios.

Samuel Rutherford when he was on his dying bed, cried out, “When I awake I shall be satisfied with his likeness. O for arms to embrace him! O for a well-tuned harp!” As he uttered these words he stretched out his hands as though he were grasping the golden harp that was waiting for him. At another time he said, “Here our psalms must be short; but how much leisure will we have there to sing.”

Alas, we are not all Samuel Rutherfords; and our hearts are often anything else than “well-tuned harps.” Sin makes horrible discords there. Passion strikes one string, and envy another, and discontent another, and unbelief a fourth, until the soul becomes like a bedlam of strange noises. No genuine praise can go up from such disordered hearts. The most devout hymn if sung in such a



state of mind, would be almost an abomination.

Paul tells us how to get our inward harps attuned aright, and how to keep them in tune. He says, "Be filled with the Spirit." Then all the ten strings will sound together. Faith will strike on her string, "I know whom I believe;" and Hope will respond, "I shall yet praise him;" and Patience on a low note responds, "All things work together for good to them that love God;" and Gratitude chimes in, "My cup runneth over;" and Love touches a loud key that rings out, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and none on earth do I desire besides Thee." Such music as this has issued from chambers of poverty and beds of pain, and from even the brink of the tomb. Two such harps were immured in a Roman dungeon at midnight, and they overflowed into a song that made the dungeon shake, and aroused all the prisoners.

Happy is the man who can begin to rehearse for Heaven by attuning his heart to the will of God. He is like the old Psalmist's psaltery, every wind that providence sends only makes music in him. Even boisterous gales of adversity call forth grand and sublime strains of resignation. When he is in trouble, he "giveth songs in the night." The kind acts he performs for others touch sweet chords in his memory. And amid all the harsh and jangled discords of this world, such a Christ-loving soul is a harp of gold making constant melody in the ear of God.

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## CCV.

A genuine "revival" is only nothing more than the nominal condition of what every Christ-penetrated church should be, all through the year. The sin and shame of too many churches is that they become mere barges to be towed along by the steam-tug who is paid so many thousands a year to tow them. As long as his steam holds out, the barge goes swimmingly. When the cylinder explodes from *over-pressure*, the poor tug is sent to Europe for repairs, or goes to the resting-place of all broken machineries of body and mind, in the cemetery. A living church keeps its pastor alive. A pastor who has a ten-men power in himself cannot move a church that has no heart to worship and no "mind to work."

## CCVI.

Nearly all revivals start with a single man or woman. One live coal can kindle a great flame.

## CCVII.

"We have toiled all night, and caught nothing," exclaimed the tired and hungry disciples. Then in the early gray of the daybreak they espied their Master on the beach; the net is cast on the right side of the ship, and it swarms with fish enough to

break its meshes. Nearly every revival season I have ever passed through has been on this same fashion. Difficulties and discouragements have sent us to our knees, and then we have been surprised by the advent of the Master in great power and blessing. God tests his people before he blesses them. The night is mother of the day; trust through the dark brings triumph in the dawn.

### CCVIII.

Our Master keeps ever before us that his people are to be the lights of the world. Conversion by the Holy Spirit is the original source of this light; it is the divine illumination of the heart hitherto dark in sin. Sometimes, as in the case of Paul, this process is sudden. Sometimes, as in the case of John Newton, there is at first a feeble germ, like the blue point of flame on a candle-wick, and this germ grows into a full, bright blaze. The beginning of true religion is in the first acts of penitence, the first yearnings after Christ, the first steps of obedience to him. . . . In order to shine, a Christian does not need great talents, or wealth, or conspicuous position. The little lamp by which a housewife threads her needle is as truly luminous as is the huge lantern that burns in the tower of the City Hall. Every consistent, right-living child of God, be he ever so humble, is

a candle shining in the spot where his Lord has placed him. What we need most is not the blaze of a few powerful electric lights in certain conspicuous places, but the steady shining of *every lamp* in the whole Church of Christ over the land.

A genuine revival means trimming of personal lamps.

### CCIX.

The reason why any Christian does not produce the fruits of the Spirit is simply want of inward vigor of grace. He needs the tillage of prayer and Bible-study, and a deep embroiling of new repentance and new faith in Christ, a new work of the Holy Ghost. Half of the force in Christ's army are either in the hospitals or off on furlough. The spiritual quickening which brings these useless invalids out of their beds, and these deserters back into the ranks, constitutes a genuine revival.

### CCX.

Every genuine revival of religion has a divine side and a human side. Every such revival is the gift of God ; yet it is also the work of free agents — the quickened activity of good men and women. When the winds blow upon the cinnamon-bushes, it is *from the bushes themselves* that the odors flow out. The softest of zephyrs cannot draw fragrance

from a pigweed. Faith is the gift of God ; but it is also your act and mine. Love is kindled by contact with Christ ; but we must come up close to him. The Holy Spirit may waft odors from a true Christian life ; but the *Christian must do the living*. Dead trees yield no spices. What was the secret of the success and tremendous power of the apostolic church ? Every tree was a bearing tree. Paul in his pulpit, Lydia in her cloth-store, Dorcas with her needle, John amid his flock at Ephesus—each and all were “always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

## CCXI.

Nowhere is the subtle moral influence so potent as in the home which God intended to be the primary training-school for the commonwealth and the Church. Puritan homes made Puritan character. Out of many a lowly New England farmhouse with a rag carpet on its floor and a few godly books on its table, have gone the Goodells, the Spauldings and the Mills, to our early foreign missions. They have given the best blood to the American Pulpit and American State. It was the religious atmosphere that penetrated the very core of character.

No Christian government, no healthy public conscience, no Bible-philanthropies, no godly church life, can exist without their roots beneath Christian hearth-stones and family altars.

## CCXII.

Education begins early. It begins in infancy. It begins with the mother's first look and gentle word, with a father's smile or his terrifying frown. The child may be sweetened by a sweet atmosphere about its cradle. Or it may be fretted into irritations by the harsh, peevish words and sour looks and scoldings which make a Babel of the home. Education begins with the tear in a mother's eye, with the first doll given to the eager grasp, with the sight of a flower on the table which is to be admired, but not handled ; with the first "No" that is firmly enforced ; with the thousand other sights and sounds and acts that make *first impressions*. These are the most lasting. They go deepest, and never are obliterated. It is safe to say that a majority of all our men and women are made what they are during the first ten years of their existence.

## CCXIII.

The highest position on the globe is to be a *teacher*. Jesus himself, the Apostles, the great shaping characters in this world, have been those who dropped immortal seeds into human hearts. When John Elliott had reached his eighty-sixth year, a friend visited him and found him teaching the alphabet to a poor Indian child. "Why don't

you rest from your work now?" inquired the friend. The old hero answered, "I have asked God to keep me useful to the last, and now that I can no longer preach, he gives me strength to teach this poor child." Elliott addressing his dusky crowds of savages under the Massachusetts pines, is a striking character; but Elliott leaning from his arm-chair to guide a barbarian's child through the alphabet into God's Word, is sublime, apostolic, *Christ-like!* As a picture of practical religion it is as beautiful as the sight of dear old Doctor Muhlenberg carrying a tray of dishes from the room of a patient in St. Luke's Hospital. When some one asked him why he did not call a servant, he characteristically replied "Oh! I am only a waiter here myself in the Lord's hotel." It is a glorious thing to be one of the Lord's teachers in the Lord's great nursery.

## CCXIV.

One of the hardest things to many a Christian is to serve his Saviour as a "private," when his pride tells him that he ought to wear a "shoulder-strap" in Christ's army.

## CCXV.

The diadem that Jesus wears was fashioned on Calvary, and the heavenly crowns which we may

aspire to, must be wrought out of such costly material as penitence, submission, suffering, patience, toil and self-crucifixion.

## CCXVI.

If the Christ of Christianity cannot and does not endow a frail sinner with supernatural power to resist terrible temptations, then is Christianity a confessed imposture and delusion. But it does stand this very crucial test. Multitudes have given the triumphant testimony that, under sore pressure the Lord stood with them and strengthened them. Their testimony has always been, "When I am weak, then am I strong" — that is, when I get emptied of self-trust Jesus comes in and strengthens me.

## CCXVII.

Humility is the chief element in every healthy, robust Christian. It keeps him from soaring up into self-conceit, and holds him down in an implicit rest on Jesus, as his rock of strength. Anteus was invincible as long as he stuck to his mother-earth.

When Hercules got him, he strangled him. No Christian is ever conquered while he lies low and firm on Christ. Then the divine strength is perfected in the Christian's weakness.



## CCXVIII.

Paul's constant endeavor was to empty himself of Paul, and to be filled with the fulness of his Lord. In October, the farmer is careful to get the chaff and the bran out of his granary, in order to make room for his wheat. He empties, in order to fill. At the seaside certain molluscs stick tightly to the rocks. Each *mollusc* clings so tenaciously that the concussion of the waves cannot smite it off. The secret of its hold is that the mollusc is empty. If it were to be filled either with air or with flesh, it would drop off immediately. This illustrates literally the condition of every humble, honest, healthy believer who has been emptied of self, and so clings by a divine law, closely to the Rock of Ages. As soon as he should become puffed with pride or gorged with fleshly lusts, he would yield to the wave of temptation and be swept away. But while he is weak in himself he is immovable through Christ strengthening him.

## CCXIX.

The first essential to discipleship of the Lord Jesus was the willingness to deny self, and to bear a cross at his bidding. That principle runs through all the deepest, richest, Christian experience, and will do so to the end of time. God's

people are never so exalted as when they are brought low; never so enriched as when they are emptied; never so advanced as when they are set back by adversity; never so near the crown as when under the cross.

## CCXX.

When the richest American of his day was in his last fatal sickness, a Christian friend proposed to sing for him, and the hymn he named was, "*Come, ye sinners, poor and needy.*" "Yes, yes," replied the dying millionaire, sing that for me; I feel *poor* and *needy*." Yet at that moment the stock markets of the globe were watching and waiting for the demise of the man who could shake them with a nod of his head. "Poor and needy!" How the sand sweeps from under a man's soul in such an hour as that!

## CCXXI.

Christian cheerfulness is that sunshiny, hopeful, happy frame which comes from *heart-health*. Such a temper of mind doeth the body good "like a medicine." For many a lean dyspeptic is dying of sheer worry and peevishness. The acrid humors of the mind strike through and disease the digestive organs. The medicine such a man wants is not to be found in the drug store. A good dose of

divine grace, with a few grains of thankfulness, and a bracing walk on some labor of love to the poor, will do more to put healthy blood into his weazen skeleton than all the drugs of the apothecary.

Look at your mercies with *both* eyes, and at your troubles and trials with only half an eye.

Keep your heart's window always open toward Heaven. Let the blessed light of Jesus' countenance shine in. It will turn tears into rainbows.

## CCXXII.

Contentment is true heart-quiet under God's will. Its fountain is the heart. As long as that keeps sweet and satisfied with God, there is not much danger of acid on the lips, or a scowl on the brow. The real marah from which nearly all the grumbling issues, is a sour, unsanctified heart. Discontent is the rust which tarnishes the brightest profession, and gnaws out the very core of faith. It never removes one sorrow, and yet kills a hundred joys. It disgraces our religion, disgusts the world, and insults our God. Even when we are on a cross of trial it only mingles a cup of vinegar and gall to make our sufferings the more bitter. In nothing is God's forbearance more conspicuous than the patience with which he bears with chronic grumblers.

Strive to keep a good conscience. Seek for a fresh invoice of faith. Unbelief can scoff and

growl; faith is the nightingale that sings in the darkest hour. Faith can draw honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flint. With Christ in possession and Heaven in reversion, it marches to the music of the one hundred and third Psalm over the roughest road, and against the most cutting blast.

## CCXXIII.

A moping, sour, discontented, grumbling Christian is a disgrace to the name he bears. If such a poor bulrush should ask a shrewd man of the world to embrace Christianity, the man might well reply, "I now have trouble enough of my own already without being troubled with such a doleful religion as yours is;" and he would be right. A cheerful, sunny-faced piety, which rejoices in the Lord always, wins converts. What a joyous brace of prisoners were those two men who were locked down in Phillippi's horrid dungeon at midnight! They are singing down there until the old Bastile rings again. The other prisoners hear them. The Lord has put a new song into their mouths. Those apostolic Christians had their mouths filled with joy and their tongues with singing.

## CCXXIV.

Look on God's side of everything, for that is the bright side. His clouds always have silver linings.

Look more at the promises ; more at Jesus, the uncomplaining man of sorrows ; more at the glory which is not far off. Strive for more holiness ; for the more you are sanctified the better will you be satisfied. Be sure of this — there are no grumblers in Heaven.

## CCXXV.

There is only one practical remedy for this deadly sin of anxiety, and that is to *take short views*. . . . That is a short view which only takes in immediate duty to be done, the immediate temptation to be met, and the immediate sorrow to be carried. . . .

Sometimes young Christians say to me, "I am afraid to make a public confession of Christ ; I may not hold out." They have nothing to do with holding *out* ; it is simply their duty to hold *on*. When future trials and perils come, their Master will give them help for the hour, if they only make sure that they *are his*. The short view they need to take is a close, clear view of their own spiritual wants, and a distinct view of Jesus as ever at hand to meet those wants. If the fishermen of Galilee had worried themselves over the hardships they were to encounter, they might have been frightened out of their apostleship and their eternal crowns. . . . Some of us, at the beginning of a year's work, are tempted to overload ourselves

with the anticipation of how much we have to do ; we need not worry if we will only remember that during the whole year there will be *only one* working day, and that is — *to-day*. Sufficient to each day is the labor thereof.

Once more we say, let us take short views. Let us not climb the high wall till we get to it, or fight the battle till it opens, or shed tears over sorrows that may never come, or lose the joys and blessings that we have, by the sinful fear that God will take them away from us. We need all our strength and all the grace God can give us for to-day's burdens and to-day's battle. To-morrow belongs to our Heavenly Father. I would not know its secrets if I could. It is far better to know whom we trust, and that he is able to keep all we commit to him until the last great day.

## CCXXVI.

The best days of the Church have always been its singing days. Luther set all Germany to chanting the *Ein feste burg*, and the priests found that unless they could stop the contagion of holy song, the Reformation would spread like fire in a stubble-field. John Wesley was a master-builder ; but the walls of Methodism never would have gone up so rapidly if they had not been built to Charles Wesley's music. That one hymn, *Jesus, Lover of my Soul*, gave the pitch to a thousand praise-meetings.

When a soul is filled with the joy of the Lord, the voice of song becomes as natural as it is with a group of happy children to shout for glee. Heaven is full of seraphic song, because Heaven is full of seraphic bliss. And he who has Jesus and his grace more abundantly in his soul, will break forth into singing. We even read in the prophet Zephaniah that the Lord God rejoices over Zion "with singing!"

## CCXXVII.

Life is a battle with many a sharp encounter, many an agonizing wound, many a hard bivouac. But we can "make it ring" with the voice of serene and triumphant praise. We do not sing enough. Our hearts should oftener warm with the mercies and promises and loving kindnesses of our God, until the lips should break forth into singing. Heaven is vocal with God's singers. Those anthems are born of a love that cannot keep silent. And the purest and most perennial fountain of song on earth is a soul filled full with the presence of the Lord Jesus.

## CCXXVIII.

Singing plays a great part in God's Word, and in God's world. The first song we read of was that jubilant anthem which rang out over the Red

Sea, where Moses and the children of Israel "sang a song unto the Lord." Was there no singing ever known before? There must have been. Jubal must have accompanied his harp with the voice. When Laban scolded Jacob for stealing away so slyly, he told him that he would have cheered his going "with songs and tabret and harp." Perhaps Noah's family relieved their loneliness in the ark by some lively household music. Nay; Mother Eve may have crooned a lullaby over her first baby. The highest period of Jewish glory was the highest era of song. Her greatest king was the king of singers. "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live," exclaims the royal Psalmist. Our Divine Lord and his disciples certainly sang one hymn together; and it is likely that they often mingled their voices in the grand old Hebrew melodies. What an exquisite touch that is in Job where a "widow's *heart* is made to sing for joy." So Paul and Silas felt such inward gratitude and joy that even at midnight in their noxious and filthy dungeon, they pealed out God's praise. Blessings on the triumphant 'grace that giveth songs in the night! When a soul is filled with the love of Jesus, the voice of praise is irrepressible. Martyrs' cells and beds of anguish and hovels of bitterest poverty have all been cheered with holy song.

Every redeemed, forgiven, heaven-bound heart should be a robin singing in the branches of the



tree of life. Those hours in which we do the least sinning are those we spend in singing to our God.

## CCXXIX.

No lay of Calvary has ever yet approached in pathetic grandeur that offering of Watts':

When I survey the wondrous Cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

No funeral hymns have equalled those which issued from Watts' pensive spirit. How many of us can recall the first scenes of burial which we witnessed in our early homes! We seem to see again the rural neighbors gathered on the grass before the door, while the sun shimmered through the trees upon the group around the open coffin. We seem to hear again to the sweet strains of old *China*, those soul-melting words:

Why should we tremble to convey  
This body to the tomb?  
There the dear form of Jesus lay,  
And left a long perfume.

His body rests in Bunfields, the Westminster Abbey of the glorious Puritans. Close by the gate, and not far from Bunyan's grave, is a plain tomb,

which bears the name of Isaac Watts, *the father of the English hymn.*

A fine hymn is the consummate flower of doctrine.

### CCXXX.

Many of our richest hymns are prayers in metre.  
And few yearnings break forth oftener in the  
psalmodes of God's people than the yearning for  
soul rest.

Here in the body pent,  
Absent from Him I roam;  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
One day's march nearer home.

There are few finer verses in the whole range of  
devotional poetry. It is the pilgrim's wayfaring  
song as he pulls up the tent-pins every morning,  
and moves onward towards his everlasting rest.

### CCXXXI.

Never do what you cannot ask Christ to bless;  
and never go into any place or any pursuit in  
which you cannot ask Christ Jesus to go with you.

### CCXXXII.

To every Christian the law of Christ will be  
the law of his pleasures. Walking in the Spirit, he

does not stop to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Free to choose his pleasures, he is too free to want the sinful ones. As when we listen to a well-tuned orchestra, the music of the horns mingles with the rich swell of the bugle and the finer notes of the delicate viols, so a true Christian life should be full of heaven-tuned harmony, in which pleasure shall blend with toil, in which work shall soften play, and recreation shall rise into that strain of holy or heroic activities which impart to life both its sweetness and its sinew. Existence on earth is too short to be wasted in play ; but it must not be made shorter by unremitting toil. Whatsoever ye do, *do all to the glory of God*. This rule permits liberty, and prohibits license ; it padlocks the door to every sinful amusement, but opens a gateway through which life may become a procession of pure enjoyments, until it swells into the rapture of Heaven.

## CCXXXIII.

The law of Christianity is not an iron-clad asceticism. God never made a man to be a monk, or this bright world to be a monastery. If life has its times to weep, so hath it times to laugh. Our blessed Lord more than once shed tears ; but may he not have often smiled, or even indulged in the good old Christian liberty of laughter ? Holiness signifies wholeness, *wealth*, health ; and health breeds innocent mirth. If mirth may be innocent,

recreation is not only innocent, it is *indispensable*. Martin Luther relieves his stern polemics with the Pope by cheerful songs at the fireside and by decorating Christmas-trees for the children; old Lyman Beecher lets off the steam after an evening's work at revival preaching, by capering to the music of his violin until his prudent spouse protests against his salutary exercise, lest he wear out his home-knit stockings. Gladstone, the king of living statesmen, recreates with his axe; Spurgeon, the king of living preachers, recreates with his game of bowls; the saintly McCheyne of Scotland, with his gymnastics, poles and bars. All these were men, not angels. God has ordained that man should play as well as labor. The friction of the care and toil requires this lubrication. Childhood is a type of wholesome piety, both from its fund of faith, and its fund of eminent playfulness. It is a true saying that no creature lives which must not work, and may not play. What is recreation? We reply: Everything that re-creates what is lost by daily life's friction and fatigue. Whatever makes the body healthier, the mind clearer and the immortal powers more vigorous, is Christian recreation. To deny ourselves such wholesome reanimation may be to hazard our folly; but to restrain others from them is an infringement upon Christian liberty. The rights of Christian conscience are sacred here as elsewhere; but conscience requires solid principles of truth for its guidance.

## CCXXXIV.

We lay down, then, this principle : That whatsoever tends to improve the body and mind is right ; whatever endangers the moral health and inflames the evil passions is wrong. The one strengthens ; the other only stimulates and often poisons. The one refreshes ; the other ruins. . . . Does the amusement recreate the body and mind, or does it minister to the evil passions ? If it recruits my physical and moral nature, it is right. But if it stimulates any fleshly lust, if it weakens conscience, if it unfits me for the service of my God, and defaces my spiritual nature, then is it a forbidden amusement. I cannot take my Master with me into it, or ask his blessing upon it. Wherever a Christian cannot take his Christ with him, he has no right to go.

## CCXXXV.

No question has a better right to the ballot-box than the vital question of legalizing<sup>9</sup> a traffic which spawns three fourths of all the pauperism and the crime. But a reliance upon civil enactments alone will be fatal. The most effectual way to prevent selling, is to prevent the buying of strong drink. Those who are instructed into habits of teetotalism furnish no custom to the dram shop, and the duty of furnishing such instruction devolves upon the

pulpit, the Church, the Sabbath-school, and the public-school — as well as upon conscientious parents. But where a large proportion of the people *demand* liquor they will obtain it, even in defiance of law. Legal suppressions of the dram-shop and moral suasion can never be divorced. They go hand in hand; each is a complement of the other.

We need a revival of total abstinence preaching and practice as the indispensable basis for both social and civil reform. The attempt to suppress liquor drinking and drunkenness by legal enactment in a community that has no temperance conscience, is as impotent as a breakwater of straw built on a quicksand. A "teetotal" rejection of the bottle by individuals is sure death to both the drinking usages and the dram-shop. Men are saved or ruined, one by one. There is no royal road to the salvation of society "by regiments."

## CCXXXVI.

The only honest word to be applied to drunkenness is not misfortune, or disease, or infirmity; it is voluntary crime. It is a self-inflicted blow at the very seat and throne of manhood; it strikes the *brain* and overthrows the reason, and demolishes for the time that moral sense which lifts man above the brute. Alcohol is really that devil which has the power to "cast both soul and body into hell." Other evil habits may impair a single organ or

vitiates a single phase of character. But a material poison that can derange the most vital part of the body, and at the same time *strike through* and reach the mind, and the immortal soul itself, must be the masterpiece of destruction.

Young men in our time and country need more frequent and solemn warnings against the bottle. It can deceive even "God's elect" if they tamper with it. The brains of powerful orators or of powerful ministers are as easily raked and ruined by the chain-shot of alcohol as the brain of the most stupid clown. There is a law of the Creator against alcoholic drinks, *written on the human brain*, which is older than any prohibitory statutes of legislatures, and more authoritative than any utterances of pulpits or of synods. Every confirmation of that law demands a hearing and a heeding. The dead utter their warnings as well as the living. "He that hath ears to hear, *let him hear!*"

## CCXXXVII.

God's Church instead of abetting the drinking-usages, must aim to discourage and destroy the drinking usages, or else be itself wounded to the heart. Whatever our duty be as citizens in law-making and law-enforcing, our province as Christians lies in the direction of moral and religious effort.

The stream of *enforced* law never rises higher than the fountain-head of public sentiment.

## CCXXXVIII.

This delusion of "moderation" has slain not only the dwarfs, but the giants. It has left its awful blood-stain in the Senate-chamber, the Parliament-house, and the pulpit. This treacherous quality inheres in the very nature of an alcoholic stimulant; therefore God's Word pronounces it a "mockery" and a "deceiver." The excitable temperaments of our American people and our peculiar climate make the popular drinks now in vogue especially dangerous. But if our moderation is to be known unto all men, pray let us know just what is moderation. Is it one glass? Or two? Or five? There are good people who make fools of themselves on two glasses, while others can carry a level head under five glasses. Is everything moderation which is inside the limit of drunkenness? Surely not; for thousands have burned up their vitals with strong wines and whiskey, who never staggered in their lives.

Moderation is an elastic word. To tell our nervously, excitable young Americans that they may drink our popular drinks, if they are careful to do so in moderation, is about equivalent to telling them that they may venture into a house infected with small-pox, if they are careful to come out with only a gentle varioloid. They may bathe in the rapids of Niagara, but they must be sure to keep above Goat Island bridge.



## CCXXXIX.

God gave Paul the grace to fight down his lusts, but God never took physical lusts so entirely out of Paul that he had nothing left to fight. Precisely so does God impart to a truly converted inebriate the divine strength to "keep under" a depraved lust for alcohol. This is the "drunkard's greatest hope;" nay, his only hope. But let the converted man beware how he falls into the dangerous delusion that his old enemy is entirely *dead*, and dead forever.

Few genuine drunkards are ever *permanently* reformed, and that is an overwhelming argument for total abstinence from the start. God never intended that when a man wantonly throws himself into the rapids he should have an easy time in swimming ashore from the cataract.

## CCXL.

If a glass of wine on my table will entrap some young man or some one who is inclined to stimulants into dissipation, then am I thoughtlessly setting a trap for his life. I am his tempter. I give the usage my sanction, and to him the direct inducement to partake of the bottled demon that sparkles so seductively before him. If the contents of that sparkling glass make my brother to stumble, he stumbles over me. If he goes away

from my table and commits some outrage under the effects of that stimulant, I am to a certain degree guilty of that outrage. I have a partnership in every blow he strikes, or in every oath he may utter, or in every bitter wound he may inflict on the hearts of those he loves while under the spell of my glass of "Cognac," or "Burgundy." I gave him the incentive to do what otherwise he might have left undone. The man who puts the bottle to his neighbor's lips is accountable for what comes from those lips under the influence of the dram, and is accountable, too, for every outrage that the maddened victim of the cup may perpetrate during his temporary insanity. In this view of the question, is it too much to ask of every professed Christian, and every lover of his kind, that they will wholly abstain from everything that will intoxicate? For the sake of your children, do it. For the sake of a brother, a husband, a friend; for the sake of those who will plead your example; for the sake of frail tempted ones who cannot say *No*! for your fellow-traveller's sake to God's bar and to the eternal world, *touch not* the bottled devil, under whose shining scales damnation hides its adder-sting!

## CCXLI.

The Bible closes the "kingdom of God" against the drunkard. The Bible declares that wine is a

mockers, and warns us against its adder-bite and serpent-sting. The Bible proclaims that noble Christian principle of self-denial, "It is good not to drink wine or anything by which thy brother stumbleth." One of these passages teaches the terrible danger of tampering with what is by its very nature a subtle deceiver. Another pronounces the awful doom of those who are enslaved by the deceiver; and the third unfolds a most sensible and beautiful principle on which all who have any regard for their fellow creatures should be willing to stand in solid phalanx. "Why don't you take wine?" inquired a certain bishop of a neighbor to whom he pushed a decanter at a public table. The reproving reply was, "I do not for the sake of my *example*."

The one momentous truth that must be instilled into the minds and consciences of the young, is that *nobody* can safely tamper with an intoxicating beverage. On the bed-rock of entire abstinence alone are they safe.

## CCXLII.

All genuine acts of philanthropy are born of the noble principle to deny self, and to honor Christ in the persons of those for whom Christ suffered. . . . There is a kind of benevolence which aims to commute with God by the mere payment of money. It is not so cruel as to leave the widow and

the orphan, who are the apostles' types of the needy and dependent classes, to starve. Therefore it contributes to found asylums, and to establish orphanages; but the *personal* sympathy — which is more to the suffering often than silver or gold — it is too indolent or too selfish to bestow. Christ exemplified the power of personal sympathy when he went to lodge with the social outcast, Zaccheus; when he dined with Simon the leper, and when he led the poor blind man out of the town. Christ taught the secret of all successful charity, yes, and of all successful effort to win sinners to the gospel of salvation. It is by personal sympathy.

The only way to bring suffering and sinning human nature to God is by personal effort, and personal effort must be born of personal sympathy.

### CCXLIII.

As God notches the centuries, the chief glory of this nineteenth one is not that it has produced steam-engines and telegraphs and telephones and other mechanical marvels, but that it is the century of Foreign Missions.

### CCXLIV.

This morning I found my way to the Mission Park (near Williams College) the sacred spot on which Christ's inspiring words, "go teach all na-

tions," came with new power into the souls of Samuel J. Mills and his praying band. I went down there alone soon after sunrise. Old Greylock was just kindling with the earliest rays. All the mountains round about were as silent as before the winds were made. The dew was yet sparkling on the grass in the open grove to which the disciples of that memorable year of 1806 "oftentimes resorted" for prayer. Part of that grove is still standing, and just above it, within a circular walk, stands the *Monument*, as pure and stainless as the faith which has consecrated this holy spot. When I first saw the monument and read the brief, touching inscription, I could not keep back the tears. It is not a memorial, like other marbles, of a death, but of a glorious *birth*. Here was born, in the pangs of prayer, a mighty purpose to make the living sacrifice for a perishing world.

The monument contains only the simple inscription—"The Birthplace of American Missions," and that other watchword, "The field is the world;" and then five modest names of men who never dreamed that they were making themselves immortal. I read them over: Samuel J. Mills, James Richards, F. L. Robbins, Henry Loomis, Byram Green. I tried to imagine the humble, coarsely-clad students, after their homely, austere meal, coming down here from the most rustic of American colleges (as it then was), and with Greylock looking down upon them like a second Olivet—

kneeling here for prayer. I seemed to hear Mills's voice yearning forth, "Lord, here are we; send us." I catch the deep *amen* with which the other four voices chimed in at the close of the petition. I can imagine the sweet disentangled pilgrim spirit with which they went back to their studies. Henceforth they were consecrated to God. The mountains around were their witnesses. They had "no more place in these parts," and their eyes looked beyond the seas for their field of blessed toil. I wish every American student could come and see this holy spot; such a pilgrimage might shame down selfishness and recruit the ranks of American torch-bearers to the lands yet lying in the midnight of heathenism.

## CCXLV.

The Luthers and Wesleys who have pioneered great reformatations, the missionaries of Christ who have invaded the kingdoms of paganism, have had to endure night-watching and sleepless work before God opens to them the gates of the morning.

## CCXLVI.

Many Christians are so wrapped up in one or two favorite schemes of benevolence, which become their "hobbies," that they have no time or thought for cases of suffering close by them.

## CCXLVII.

God's government is the solidest ground of my confidence and joy. It underlies all my theology, and is the very rock-bed on which I rest my salvation. If his irrevocable laws push me back and hedge me in from sin, then all the better. If his sharp knife prunes me, then I am only the more sure that he loveth me. Afflictions are like the cactus plant of his making—very unsightly and full of thorns; but they bear marvellous flowers in their time.

## CCXLVIII.

God not only reigns, but he governs his world by a most beautiful law of compensations. He setteth one thing over against another. Faith loves to study the illustrations of this law, notes them in her diary, and rears her pillars of praise for every fresh discovery.

One of the sweetest enjoyments of Heaven will be to review our own experiences under this law of compensations, and to see how often affliction worked out for us the exceeding weight of glory.

## CCXLIX.

One of the excellencies of God's government is that he never alters his laws to meet special cases.

They are unchangeable. If we break God's commandments we must pay the penalty.

All along the seductive pathways of self-indulgence God places his toll-gates of retribution.

Nothing hurts us like the hurts we give to our conscience.

### CCL.

Some people imagine that Sinai is extinct. Certain pulpits seem to be pitched so far away from the sublime mountain, that its august peak is no longer visible, and its righteous thunders against sin are no longer audible. With this of rose-water ministers, the theology of law is voted obsolete and barbarous; the world is to be tamed and sanctified entirely by a theology of love. They preach a one-sided God—all mercy and no justice—with one half of his glorious attributes put under eclipse. Even sinners are not to be warned, with tears and entreaties, to flee from the wrath to come. They are to be coaxed into holiness by a magical process which makes nothing of repentance, and simply requires a "faith" which costs no more labor than the snap of a finger. This shallow system may produce long rolls of "converts," but it does not produce solid, sub-soiled Christians. Sinai is not an extinct mountain in Bible theology. Not one jot of its holy law has been lowered or repealed. In one very vital sense,



no Christian is "free from the law." It would not be a "happy condition" for him if he were so, any more than it would be a happy condition for New York or Chicago to disband their police, and to let loose their criminals into the streets. So far from being a kindness, it would be eventual cruelty to any man, or any community, to place them beyond the reach and the just penalties of divine law. This is especially an unfortunate time in which to preach a limber-backed theology which has no stiffening of the word "*ought*" in its fibre, and which seldom disturbs men's consciences with the retributions of sin. Society will not be regenerated with cologne-water. We need more of the sacred authority of *law* in our homes, more enforcement of law in the commonwealth, more reverence for God's law in our hearts, more law preaching in our pulpits, and more "law work" in the conversion of souls which are to represent Christ by keeping his commandments.

#### CCLI.

Those of us who accept the unpopular doctrine that the banishment of the wicked from Heaven will be endless, are compelled to this opinion by the clear revelations of God's Word. We have not invented the doctrine. We do not preach it because it is popular. As Paul declared the gospel of Calvary to be "a stumbling-block to the Jew

and foolishness to the Greek," so we are willing to acknowledge that eternal punishment is neither pleasant nor palatable to the majority of mankind. With the justice or the mercy involved, we have nothing to do. God is abundantly able to vindicate his own dealings with his creatures; he asks no apologies from us. All that we, who are teachers of the inspired Word, need to ascertain, is, "What saith the Lord?" Whatever the Lord has declared, we are bound to preach. There our responsibility ends.

## CCLII.

There is only one cloud in the universe which never knows any lining of light, and that is the cloud of Divine wrath against sin. No rainbow ever gilds it; no smile of God ever plays upon its terrible blackness. It is like unto<sup>o</sup> that pitchy "smoke of torment" which John saw rolling up forever from the pit. Let the very thought of it send us to Christ, as to a covert from the tempest.

## CCLIII.

What does the Bible mean by "loss of the soul?" Does it mean an utter annihilation? I find no such idea expressed on any page of Holy Writ. But I do discover that it is lost to God's

word when it is given up to selfishness ; it is lost to holiness when it is "sold under sin ;" it is lost to happiness when it is without hope. If I see the wreck of a gallant vessel on a beach, I say at once "This ship is lost." The broken fragments of the timbers and the tangled mass of spars and cordage may strew the strand. They are not annihilated ; yet the ship is lost. For the purposes which that vessel was built, for all beauty and usefulness, it is ruined. So, if any soul be perverted from God's service, from faith in Christ, from usefulness, from purity, and from hope of Heaven, it is a ruined soul. To continue in this condition through eternity would be an eternal "*death*."

## CCLIV.

It is a tremendous truth, though constantly forgotten, that this vapor of human life never appears and disappears but *once*. "It is appointed unto man once to die." This we all admit ; but do we as fully realize that it is appointed unto us only once to live ? If we could come back hither from the unseen world, and try our probation over again, how differently would we use the golden hours.

How busily that now indolent Christian would work ! How faithfully we pastors would preach righteousness and the judgment to come ! How eagerly that rich man would devote his money to the Lord's service ! . With what quick haste would

that impenitent soul snatch the offered gift of salvation! Oh! how differently would we all live, if the light of an actual visit into the eternal world were shining on a *second* probation!

But even as the leaves now lying under yonder cherry-tree will never touch those branches again or be kissed by another summer's sun, so my life and your life, kind reader, will never have another moment of probation beyond the tomb. Verily it is *now* or *never* with us. It is either a life for Christ here, or an undying death without him in the world to come! Which shall it be? Shall this fleeting vapor of existence glow like a rainbow, with God's smiles of approval, or shall it darken into a cloud of wrath and blackness under his just frown?

## CCLV.

A delusion which rocks thousands into a perilous slumber, is that they will yet have abundant chances to secure Heaven. "I need be in no hurry; time enough yet." This is the will-o'-the-wisp which is leading multitudes on farther and deeper into the morass of impenitence. Not only in this world will there be chances for repentance and securing Heaven, but even beyond the grave God's mercy will give them another opportunity. This delusion *is in the air* to a degree never known before. Ministers and writers of the Dorner school help to extend it,

and the procrastinating heart of man eagerly snatches at the spider's web. It is a plausible idea, and as long as it lulls conscience and gratifies the natural heart, so long it will be popular. God's Word, indeed, gives not even a hint of a second probation to those who have rejected the Saviour in this life. Our loving Lord himself was the very one who has most repeatedly and solemnly preached the doctrine of endless retribution and the hopelessness of repentance beyond the grave. It was from his merciful, loving lips that there fell such tremendous utterances as "A great gulf *fixed*;" and "These shall go away into everlasting punishment;" and "The worm dieth not and the flame is not quenched." The whole trend of the New Testament is overwhelmingly in this same direction. The mighty bell which God rings over our heads sounds out only the single note "*Now*" is the day of salvation; but against God's imperative "*Now*" thousands close their ears and allow the devil to whisper into them his delusive "to-morrow."

The very people who would scorn the name of "infidel" are those who will eagerly fasten to a delusion which has not a shadow of warrant in the Scriptures. Well might Doctor Finney say that the Bible fares badly in human hands, for Christians throw away too many of its promises, and sinners throw away all its threatenings; and but little is left of it.

## CCLVI.

Procrastination peoples hell. Some persons have a vague hope of another time of probation beyond the grave, or else that temporary punishment may prepare them for bridging the great gulf and getting into Heaven. Both these are Satan's lies, without a shadow of warrant from the Bible. Now or never is the steady, persistent appeal of the Gospel ; death comes soon, may come at any moment, and death ends probation. When Christ is knocking at your heart's door, is the time to admit him ; he may soon give his last knock.

## CCLVII.

When Apelles, the Greek painter, was asked why he bestowed so much labor upon his pictures, he replied, "Because I am painting for eternity." He used the word as a bold figure of speech ; but we may use the word literally when we say that we are painting the picture of our lives for eternity. We use fast colors. Whatever pure and holy word or deed be wrought into that picture, will stand there, imperishable and immortal. Whatever selfish or sinful thing be painted on that life-canvas can never be washed out except by the application of the blood of Jesus here in this present life. Now or never that precious blood availeth. When death comes, the process of painting stops ! No

strokes of penitence or of faith can be added to it then. No guilty spots can be washed out then. The painting is finished, and it is finished forever!

Death frames the picture, and sends it on to the Judgment-day for exhibition. Not "a private view" before a select company, but a public exhibition before an assembled multitude whom no man can number.

For God will bring every word and every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. The picture of our lives which is presented before the "great white throne" will be forever unchangeable. If the canvas is adorned with deeds, however humble, for the glory of God, then the life-work will stand as an everlasting memorial of divine grace. If life was only spent for the gratification of sinful self, then the wretched picture of it will only be held up to "shame and everlasting contempt."

We may desire most intensely to alter the portraiture then, and to improve it, but the pencil and the colors were left behind us; the hand will have lost its cunning forevermore. We may importunately beg and beseech the righteous Judge to give us one more opportunity. The irreversible answer will be, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; he that is holy, let him be holy still."

## CCLVIII.

Jesus has revealed the pathway to Heaven, and poured upon that straight and narrow road the noontide of guidance and bright encouragement. Take out of this sin-cursed world to-day the light which has beamed into it from that plain, persecuted man of Nazareth, and all its multitudinous peoples would be shrouded in a spiritual midnight.

## CCLIX.

Christ does not offer to be simply an occasional shower of blessings to the faithful believer. He promises to be a *living well*. "The water that I give him shall be *in him* a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The deepest and the most urgent wants of the heart he promises to satisfy.

## CCLX.

As the watch-maker is familiar with every wheel and pivot in the watch he has made, so the Divine Jesus knows his own workmanship. This is the infinite advantage which Christianity has over every other system. It submits the human soul to the Maker as well as to the Redeemer of that soul.

It is half the battle in family government for the parent to understand thoroughly his child.



One boy can be held by a cotton thread ; another one will break an ox-chain. But Jesus, the divine teacher, when he takes an immortal soul under his care, and into his training school, understands his pupils perfectly. He reads Mary through and through when she sits at his feet, and cheers her life by the assurance that the "better portion" is hers. In his raw experience Peter may brag of his loyalty loudly ; but the Master takes him down by the startling announcement, "before the cock crows thou shalt deny me three times over." Jesus detects the splendid capacities in Paul for the very foremost apostleship ; but he also has a place for humble Tryphena and Tryphosa, and even a use for Dorcas's needle. He knows just what is in every one of us. This makes him not a hard master, but the most kind and considerate of employers and guardians. He never lays on weak shoulders the loads which only stronger ones can carry. All the while too, sweetly come the encouraging words : "My grace is sufficient for thee. I call you not my servant ; I call you my *friend*."

## CCLXI.

Christ never drives his flock when a new field of pasturage is to be sought, or even when he discovers them on forbidden ground. When he "putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them," and draws them with the arguments of love.

What a tenderness of personal attachment there is in that phrase, "He calleth his own sheep *by name!*" What an intimacy it bespeaks! Every disciple, high or humble, is better known by Jesus than any child by its own mother. All our peculiar weaknesses, all our wants, and griefs, and backslidings, as well as our peculiar capabilities for his service, are perfectly plain to him.

The valley of death is no new place to him; for he has not only trod it himself, he has led myriads of his redeemed ones through it.

On the resurrection morn, we shall find that Jesus the Shepherd has come out of the tomb before us, the "first fruits of them that sleep." Even into Heaven he enters as "Our Forerunner." And so all through the believer's experience his loving Leader is seen going on before; and the whole duty of a godly life is summed up in that single word — *following* Jesus.

## CCLXII.

Before our blessed Lord went out to his dying agony on the cross, he made his will. He had not a shekel of silver to bequeath, or a *denarius* in the pocket of his coarse robes. A poorer man there was not that night in all Jerusalem. Yet he makes a bequest that outweighs all that the markets of the world can offer—a richer legacy than Cæsar leaves to imperial heirs. "Peace I

leave with you." Such peace as He had possessed amid innumerable persecutions and buffetings, amid poverty and obloquy, and such as filled his divine soul in view of Gethsemane and Calvary. "*My* peace I give unto you." A gift is all the dearer because it has belonged to our dearest friend, and is linked with him or her in our memory forever. Our Lord's gift is of his own "peace," which had dwelt in his own divine breast, and is poured out into the hearts which open to him. It is a peace which passeth all understanding; it *keeps* the heart from distressing commotions, from racking doubts, and from uneasy apprehensions of the judgment to come. This is genuine happiness. This heals the sore spot, and cures the heart-aches.

In the midst of the noisy world's clamors, crying off its miserable frauds, there stands one majestic personage who with a divine calmness utters the deep loving offer, "*My* peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Christ's method is the opposite of the world's and of the father of lies. Christ gives peace by healing the diseases of the soul. Instead of the wretched device of attempting to satisfy restless and unholy cravings, he expels them and brings in the new sources of joy. The world's false peace begins in delusion, goes on in sin, and ends in perdition. Christ's peace begins in pardoning grace, goes on in quiet trust, and ends in glory.

“My peace” in this world will be the prelude to “my glory” in the next world. Open your soul to the inflowing river, while you gladly sing—

Thy reign is perfect peace,  
Not mine, but Thine ;  
A stream that cannot cease,  
For its fountain is divine.  
Oh, depths unknown !  
Thou givest of Thine own  
Pouring from Thine, and filling mine.

### CCLXIII.

Jesus has many disguises, but love can discover him beneath the disguise. The two disciples found him out at Emmaus, because they welcomed him in and besought him to “abide with them.” Christ sometimes conceals himself behind some poor disciple’s coarse clothes, or behind the couch of some sick sufferer, or up in the garret of some old bed-ridden saint. And when we go there on a visit of love, pretty soon we find that Jesus is there, and we hear him say, “Inasmuch as ye do this unto one of the least of My brethren, ye do it unto Me.” If we went oftener on such errands of charity, we should oftener be able to exclaim, “It is the Lord! Not long hence the voyage over life’s dim, unsounded sea will end. As we draw near to the shore of the Better Country, let us be on the lookout for the waiting Saviour on the strand. As eternity begins to dawn, and the

shadows disappear, what a joyful recognition will it be to hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed, unto Me!" and love shall exultingly answer, "It is my Lord!"

## CCLXIV.

It is said that artesian wells never get dry; but when the torrid heats of July are parching the upper surface into drifts of dust, there is an unexhausted vein far down below that gushes up through its rocky tube, and defies the thirsty sunbeams to quench its perennial flow. So does Christ within us break up through our dusty, selfish humanity, and overflow our nature with graces, until even the desert-spot becomes a garden of the Lord.

## CCLXV.

Take the doctrine of gravitation out of Sir Isaac Newton's natural philosophy, and the system falls into rubbish. Take the divinity of Jesus Christ out of the New Testament and out of the plan of redemption, and they become a delusion and a mockery.

## CCLXVI.

Let us gather in one bouquet from the King's garden these seven fragrant flowers: Jesus the

Son of God ; Jesus our sin-bearer ; Jesus the giver of eternal life ; Jesus the hearer of our prayers ; Jesus the chastener who can turn crosses into crowns ; and Jesus the wonder-worker, who can change us into eternal likeness unto himself. These flowers will keep sweet till Heaven dawns.

### CCLXVII.

Jesus is the bringer of spiritual spring into the soul. When he comes, the time of the singing of birds comes with him. He is the Son of Righteousness who turns January into May. Really, my dear brethren, we ought each to understand that God allows every child of his to make his own almanac.

We can have warm weather, flowers, fruits and bird-songs all the year through, if we only live in the rays of Christ's countenance. The sorest sorrows of life are of our own making. We shut out God's larks from our hearts, and bring in the bats and hooting owls of miserable unbelief. These birds of evil omen disappear when the dayspring from on high visits our souls.

God offers to fill our homes and our hearts with joy and gladness if we will only let him do it. We cannot create the canary-birds ; but we can provide cages for them, and fill our dwellings with their music. Even so we cannot create the heavenly gifts which Jesus offers ; but they are ours if we

provide heart-room for them. The birds of peace, and contentment, and joy, and praise will fly in fast enough if we only invite Jesus Christ, and set the windows of our souls open for his coming.

### CCLXVIII.

Sympathy cannot bring back the departed treasure, it cannot "lift the napkin" from the face of the dead; but it does help wonderfully to lift a great load of sorrow.

Never have I felt before, as now, what an unpardonable mistake we ministers make when we fail to extend the utmost personal sympathy to the afflicted.

Nor must we attempt to apply certain bandages of consolation too soon. The bleeding heart must bleed awhile; the weeping eyes must weep, or the heart will burst. Jesus himself sought the relief of tears; none dared to say to him at Bethany, "Why weepest Thou?"

That pastor fails utterly who attempts to comfort a bereaved heart by an endeavor to stop the natural flow of grief with even a Bible promise. Nature must have her way before divine grace can do its perfect work. Perhaps this simple suggestion — learned from personal experience — may be helpful to my brother pastors in dealing with that largest family in their parishes, the family of the sorrowing.

## CCLXIX.

The smallest verse in the Bible is one of the largest and deepest in its heavenly pathos. *Jesus wept.* . . . . There is something vicarious in those tears, as there is in the precious blood shed on the cross a few days afterwards. His love seems to "insert itself vicariously right into our sorrows ;" he takes the burden right into his heart.

## CCLXX.

What a magnificent outburst of loyalty opens the ninety-third psalm ! The Lord reigneth ! He is clothed with majesty. The Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself. Thy throne is established of old. Thou art from eternity. Here we have the empire of love, the royal robe, the girdle of omnipotence, and the immovable throne. The psalmist would seem to have been thinking of the problems of life, its dark things, and its mysteries. So many things seemed irreconcilable with the divine goodness, that he admits that "clouds and darkness are round about him." But the truth flashed out through the clouds, *the Lord* reigns. That is enough. He does not try to pry into the council chamber. He cannot get behind the cloud. But love reigneth there, and "justice and righteousness are the foundation of his throne."



## CCLXXI.

As far as his providential plans are concerned, our Heavenly Father is verily a God who hideth himself. Clouds and darkness are around him, but justice and righteousness are the foundations of his throne. We dwell on the lower side of the cloud. Upon the upper side, upon God's side, the mysterious cloud of his providence is lined with light. We do not see it until he sees fit to clear away the mists or to let the light burst through. Then we are filled with wonder and joy. . . . God's long-dated promises are honored in his own good time.

## CCLXXII.

We all live on the unilluminated side of the cloud behind which God conceals his secret purposes. As on a cloudy day there are enough rays of the sun filtered through the overhanging vapor for us to walk by and to work by, so God reveals truth enough for all our practical necessities.

## CCLXXIII.

Sometimes we have an experience in life that seems like walking through a long, dark tunnel. The chilling air and the thick darkness make it hard walking, and the constant wonder is why we

are compelled to tread so gloomy a path while others are in the open day of health and happiness. We can only fix our eyes on the bright light at the end of the tunnel, and we comfort ourselves with the thought that every step we take brings us nearer to the joy and the rest that lie at the end of the way. Extinguish the light of Heaven that gleams in the distance, and this tunnel of trial would become a horrible tomb.

Every week a pastor has to confront these mysteries in the dealings of a God of love. To the torturing question, "Why does God lead me into this valley of the shadow of darkness?" We can only reply: "Even so, Father, for so it seems good in thy sight." We are brought into the tunnel, however we shrink back. There is no retreat; we have nothing left to us but to grasp the very hand that brought us there, and push forward.

When we reach Heaven we may discover that the richest, and deepest, and most profitable experiences we had in this world were those which were gained in the very roads from which we shrank back with dread. The real victory of faith is to trust God in the dark and through the dark. Let us be assured of this, that if the lesson and rod are of his appointing, and that his all-wise love has engineered the deep tunnels of trial on the heavenward road, he will never desert us during the discipline. The vital thing for us is not to deny and desert him.

## CCLXXIV.

There is a prodigious leverage for our faith in the glorious doctrine of God's providential love. It enables us to remove mountains out of our way. It stimulates us to perservering effort in the face of every obstacle.

## CCLXXV.

Our all-wise and loving God is constantly unfolding himself to his earthly children. All scientific discovery is the passage from the unknown into the known; every truth discovered is a fresh unfolding of the Creator. Very slowly, very gradually is this progress effected. Centuries passed away before Galileo found out the rotation of the earth, and Newton the law of gravitation. Other generations must roll by before man learned enough about God's laws of electro-magnetism to fashion the ocean telegraph. Yet these laws were all in existence in the days of Noah and Abraham; only they had not yet been unfolded. I once spent a night on Mount Righi, and there was no thing visible for a rood from my window. But when the morning broke, the icy crowns of the Jungfrau and the Schreckhorn began to glitter in the early beams. They had been there all the night waiting for the unfoldings of the dawn. Even so have all God's laws of the material uni-

verse and all his purposes of redeeming mercy through Jesus Christ been in existence from the beginning. They only waited for the dayspring of discovery. And one of the most delightful occupations of a devout mind is to watch the unfolding of God, and to drink in new truths as he gradually reveals them.

### CCLXXVI.

Every day intensifies my conviction that the most effectual method of saving society and building up the kingdom of Christ, is to strike for the children. Romanism understands this; and within the first month of its existence the hand of the priest is on the head of the babe. The secret of the long life of Judaism through the centuries is to be found in the fact that the law of Moses has been the first and deepest instruction of every black-eyed boy and girl born within the Israelitish fold. What a strange blindness and stupidity is shown in the ranks of Protestantism very often; to transplant grown trees instead of shoots and saplings, would not be more preposterous.

### CCLXXVII.

Childhood is the May of life — its seeding and planting time. The Devil never despises one of the little ones. He sows his tares in the mellow

soil. Give him the children and he is sure of the men and women. Let the oath or the lie get upon the lips before Christ's words do, and those lips will not be easily cleansed. If a boy is not taught to understand and to hate the intoxicating glass, he runs a terrible risk of being stung by the adder. If our children are not led early toward Christ, they will get their feet thoroughly planted in the road to death. No wiser, diviner sentence ever fell from the lips of the Great Teacher than when he said: Take heed that ye despise not —*i. e.*, that ye neglect not or even overlook not, one of these little ones.

### CCLXXVIII.

Jesus was the first religious teacher who ever honored childhood. The Greek and Roman philosophers and moralists regarded children as, so many weaklings to be fed, educated, or amused. Jesus had not only a perfect sympathy with children, but he made them types and emblems of the best qualities of Christian character. Their simplicity, their implicit trustfulness, their dependence, and other traits were to be sought for as elements of the best developed piety. Setting a Jewish child in the presence of his disciples, he said to them —

“Except ye become as *little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”

## CCLXXIX.

A very large portion of Christ's inspired biography is occupied by his personal interviews — with a guilty woman by a well, with a publican by the wayside, with a young ruler, with a blind beggar, or with a Nicodemus in a private room. To the Son of God, as to every faithful Gospel-minister, *one soul was a great audience*. The single extended discourse which Christ delivered, was aimed at every auditor before him.

There is an unbolted door in about everybody's heart, if we will only ask God to show us where to find it.

## CCLXXX.

It is not honest work that really wears any Christian out. It is the *ague fit of worry* that consumes strength and furrows the cheek and brings on decrepitude. That giant of Jesus Christ who drew the gospel chariot from Jerusalem to Rome, and had the care of all the churches on his great heart, never complained of being tired. The secret was, he never chafed his powers with a moment's worry. He was doing God's work, and he left God to be responsible for results. He knew *whom* he believed, and felt perfectly sure that all things work together for good to them who love the Lord Jesus.

## CCLXXXI.

The most successful toilers are those who know best how to serve God in "small things." The Almighty never "despises the day of small things," or else he would not put his mighty oaks into acorns, or his golden grain-crops into little seed-bags.

## CCLXXXII.

I may be voyaging to eternity in a little boat ; but however humble be the craft, it contains my immortal hopes. Only here and there is a great galley to be seen, with its banks of oars. But the tiniest skiff that bears a child's soul, or is freighted with the humblest disciple's little all, is just as surely under our Commander's eye, as if it were a royal argosy. We are safe even in a little boat when Jesus keeps watch over it. Many a seventy-four, manned with self-righteousness, has foundered in the deep ; but Heaven's harbor will be covered with little boats that our Commander has piloted home through storm and darkness.

## CCLXXXIII.

How can a Christian sleep in such an age as ours ? When life grows grander every year, by the increased knowledge and extended facilities for

achieving great results for God and humanity? When so many harvest fields of labor invite the sturdy arm and glowing heart? When the wails of a world's sorrow rise on every gale? To sleep through such a period of the world's history is a fearful crime. Truly is it "as in against heaven to have no pulse that beats in the palpitations of an age that trembles with the footsteps of an advancing God."

## CCLXXXIV.

A rich *soul* can be always giving; as the noon-day sun overflows his golden urn of ceaseless radiance, and is yet none the poorer in warmth and glory when a whole universe has been lighted.

## CCLXXXV.

As the glory of a healthy apple-tree is its fruit, so the glory of a genuine Christian is his usefulness. He does not merely blossom out with a godly profession, he bears fruit with all his might and main. There is not a sapless twig or a barren bough on the whole tree which is planted by the rivers of grace and yieldeth its fruit every month. In our old home orchard, there were many varieties of apples. So in God's orchards there are ancient olives — Augustine and Calvin — rich, juicy "sweetings" like Rutherford and Baxter — mellow pippins



grown by Leighton, Hamilton, and Taylor, and bountiful bearers like Spurgeon and Newman Hall. Even some small trees bear large fruit. Whether on a foreign mission field, or in an humble tract-district, or in a charity school, or in a sick room where love moves about with gentle tread — the fruits of the Spirit ripen under the smile of God. Herein is the Father glorified, that we bear much fruit on every branch.

## CCLXXXVI.

Those first Christians were men and women who understood thoroughly their personal responsibility and the power of personal effort. Find, if you can, the appointment of a single "committee" in the Book of Acts. Seven men were indeed designated to the work of dispensing charities to the poor; but that was done in order to release the others for personal labor in preaching the Word of Life. Very little is said about church organizations. Nothing was allowed to keep man from man; the individual believer from the individual sinner. Peter goes right after Cornelius; Philip talks directly to the Eunuch; Aquila and his wife have Apollos as their "Bible class;" and Dorcas is a "sewing society" in herself. Amid all the endless prattle about "work" and "lay labor" is there not danger that each Christian will forget that he or she is the bearer of *one lamp*, and if

that lamp be well filled and its light be thrown on one sinner's path, more good will be accomplished than by a whole torch-light procession got up for parade? A crowd is often in the way when an individual is to be rescued. Christ led a deaf man out of the crowd when he wished to deal with him alone. Those early Christians did wonders for God and for a dying world. They accomplished it by the simple method, "every man to his work." Personal holiness made each one a partner with the invincible Jesus.

#### CCLXXXVII.

Useful occupation is not only a tonic, it is a sedative to the troubled spirit. Instead of looking in upon our own griefs until we magnify them, we should rather look at the sorrows of others, in order to lighten, and lessen them.

Honest work seldom hurts us; it is worry that kills. . . . God never has built a Christian strong enough to stand the strain of present duties and all the tons of to-morrow's duties and sufferings piled upon the top of them.

#### CCLXXXVIII.

The great truth to be taught nowadays is that every member of Christ's flock is called to Christ's service, in some way or method. The humblest

have a share in the work, and may have a share in the glory at the final day of coronation. That individual church in which the "rank and file" are all seeking the Spirit, and living lives of personal consecration to Christ, is more likely to be a powerful church than if it had a Whitefield or a Chalmers for its pastor. The need of the hour is not for more geniuses and scholars in the pulpit, but for more personal piety and consecration among the masses of God's people.

### CCLXXXIX.

God has ordained that this world's lusts and pleasures and treasures shall pass away. He has also ordained that one kind of life and one kind of labor shall abide forever. It is the life that is spent in doing his will; it is the labor that is spent in advancing his kingdom. He is the wise man whose chief question every day is, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Along the line of his everyday's thoughts and activities he detects the will of God running. He strives to know that will and to do it. This is the object of his Bible-reading, his prayers, and his watchings of himself and of Providence. And every word he utters, every act he performs in conformity with his Father's will, has an enduring permanence.

One hundred years ago scores of British mer-

chants and bankers were toiling to make solid fortunes ; and scores of writers and civilians were toiling to win solid fame ; and thousands more were striving for solid happiness in some selfish fashion. They are all gone now—forgotten like last winter's snowflakes. But a modest servant of Christ in Gloucester, named Raikes, determined to gather in the poor children of the pin-makers on Sunday afternoon, and teach them some wholesome Bible truths. A less conspicuous man there hardly was in King George's dominions than this modest editor of an obscure paper. But to-day all Christendom stands in grateful admiration before the magnificent structure of Sabbath-school influence and power which has been rising for one hundred years. It is one of the solidest structures on the globe ; it will outlive all the fortunes and the fame which worldlings were toiling after a century ago. That massive monument bears the modest name of Robert Raikes, and beneath are inscribed these Heaven-sent words, "This world passeth away and the lust thereof ; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Such lives never end. Such labor lasts. Chalmers lives to-day in the Free Kirk of Scotland. Franke is still giving homes to orphans ; and Howard's hand is still purifying prisons. John Bunyan helps me towards Heaven every day ; William Cowper sings in our prayer-meeting continually, "There is a fountain filled with blood."

Charles Hodge preaches every Sabbath in scores of American pulpits. Their works do follow them. Such work will outlast the Pyramids even. Not merely the noble deeds of these conspicuous saints and benefactors will endure, but *every* faithful word and every godly act of every honest Christian, even the humblest and obscurest, will link itself with Almighty strength, and "*abide forever.*"

## CCXC.

There is only one cure for indolence, effort. The only cure for selfishness, sacrifice. The only cure for timidity, to plunge into duty before the shiver comes on. The only cure for unbelief, trust Christ.

## CCXCI.

Perhaps the severest strain is put upon our faith by what we consider the provoking *delays* on the part of God. We work for results, expect results, and yet the results do not come. What pastor, what Sunday-school teacher, what praying parent, has not had his or her faith sorely tried in this way over and over again? The trouble is, that we imagine that we can command the results, when we are no more responsible for them than a diligent farmer is for next week's weather. He that observeth the clouds shall not sow, and he that regardeth the winds shall never reap. For what

we entrust to God, you and I are not responsible. *He is our Trustee.* It is not my "lookout," but his, whether my honest endeavors succeed or be baffled. Peter was not responsible for the number of sick people he should restore at Lydda, or of the dead he should raise at Joppa, or of converts that he should win at Cæsarea. All that we are responsible for is the unwearied, conscientious discharge of duty to its very uttermost; everything beyond that belongs to God. If he can wait for results, we can. X I often think of the somewhat blunt but honest answer of the old nurse to the impatient mother who said to her, "Your medicine don't seem to make my dear child better." The nurse replied, "Yes, it will; don't you worry. You just trust God; *He is tedious, but he's sure.*" The simple-hearted old body blurted out in her homely way what we ministers often feel, though we should hardly dare to phrase it as she did.

X The pull at the oar of duty is often a long and tedious one. The flesh grows weary and the spirit faints when the waves smite the bow, and hinder our headway. Impatient and discouraged, we sometimes threaten to throw down the oars and "let her drift." But the voice of the Divine Helmsman utters the kind but strong rebuke, "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?" And before we are aware, the bow strikes the strand, and we are at the very land whither the Blessed Pilot was guiding us.

## CCXCII.

The discipline of the human heart affords one of the grandest arenas on which God expends the Divine wisdom and exercises the Divine love.

## CCXCIII.

A rainbow, with all its polychromatic splendors, is nothing but sunlight playing upon a background of storm. A Christian's joy in sorrow is simply the reflection of Christ's smile of love upon the cloud. If no sun, then no rainbow. If Jesus be hidden, then hope disappears. If Jesus depart, how great is that darkness.

## CCXCIV.

He is a meagre, crude, unfinished, unripe and unimpressive Christian who does not possess those peculiar graces which are only to be won by suffering and trial.

## CCXCV.

The chemist who is purifying silver over a hot flame always keeps the crucible on the fire until he can see his own face reflected in the clear metal as in a mirror. When the dear Jesus who "sitteth as a refiner" over your heart can see his own

image reflected in you, then will the chastening discipline be finished. Then he can break the crucible, and pour thy gifts and thy influence into such a mould as may suit best his all-wise purpose. He requires pure gold to make the "vessel to his own honor."

## CCXCVI.

Among God's jewels, there is no brilliant which flashes with such lustre as the tear of true penitence.

## CCXCVII.

It is not only the new convert unto whom Christ is the bringer of gladness; he is the best of comforters to the believer in his times of shadow and sorrow. Ah, my brother, there is an "upper room," a secret chamber of the heart, whose key you and I surrender only to the dearest friend. It is the soul's *sanctum* with which the stranger inter-meddled not. Sometimes that apartment becomes dark and lonesome. The candle well nigh goes out, and the atmosphere is chill and heavy. *One* enters through the closed door, and the assuring voice of his love speaketh the dear old words spoken long ago, "Peace be unto you." He shows us the scars of his self-sacrifice; he opens the jewel-casket of his promises. His consolations fill



the room with their heavenly perfume. On that bosom we can lay our sad, weary head; his right hand is underneath it, and his left hand doth embrace us. Our beloved is ours, and we are his; there is none on earth whom we desire beside him. His smile fills the soul-chamber with sunshine, and then are we all glad because we have seen our Lord.

## CCXCVIII.

God keeps a school for his children here on earth; and one of his best teachers is named *Disappointment*. He is a rough teacher; severe in tone and harsh in his handling, sometimes, but his tuition is worth all it costs. Many of our best lessons through life have been taught us by that same stern-old schoolmaster, *Disappointment*.

## CCXCIX.

Sharp bodily affliction, even if it does not endanger life, is often a wholesome process. Paul's thorn in the flesh, Robert Hall's excruciating pains and Richard Baxter's physical sufferings were a very expensive part of their education, but they graduated with higher honor and a brighter crown. Fiery trials make golden Christians. When the balsam-trees in God's garden are cut deep with the knife they emit the sweetest gums.

The hour of the Christian's extremity is the hour of Christ's opportunity. The richest jewels of grace often lie at the bottom of sorrow's cup.

## CCC.

When Michael Angelo saw a block of marble lying in the dirt, he said, "There is an angel in that marble, and I will bring it out." His hammer and chisel struck hard and deep, till the angel came forth. God's hammer of trial, blow on blow, brings out such angels as Faith, and sweet-visaged Peace, and strong-limbed Patience and Sympathy, and the Love that has the likeness of Jesus Christ.

## CCCI.

The bruised flower emits most fragrance; and a bruised Christian puts forth the sweetest odors of humility and heavenly-mindedness. . . . It helps a vine to be pruned. Our Father uses the knife when he sees that we require it. It is only one of his ways of helping us in the time of need.

## CCCII.

When we see a man beaten upon with adversity, or lying under a perfect euroclydon of trials, and yet preserving a calm, cheerful spirit, we do not see, always, what is the secret of his serenity.

We wonder why he is "not moved as other men are." But God sees a hope sure and steadfast, lying down deep beneath the surface. Trouble strips the man of much of his external gear and cordage, but never touches the interior source and strength of his piety.

## CCCIH.

This world's boasted successes often prove to be wretched failures; but no genuine godly life was ever a failure. Its losses are turned into gains; its crosses are wrought into crowns of glory. The peace which sin promises is a mockery. The peace which Jesus bestows passeth all understanding and is insured beyond all contingencies.

## CCCIV.

There is not a spiritual biography in all of Christ's universal Church, in all ages, but presents a constant alternation of *ups* and *downs*. When a Christian is carrying to many topsails, God is very apt to send a gale which strips off the canvas. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased" is as true of the Christian as it is of the worldling. But when a chastened soul lies very low before God, how sweet it is to hear him whisper in the ear of faith, "Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted."

We very much doubt if it would be safe for us always to be "up" in the world. It is a wholesome process to be "taken down" occasionally. The grass in our dooryards has a tendency to grow rank, and it requires to be taken down by a mower. The yard never looks so well as after the sharp cutter has gone over it. Many a true Christian never appears so attractive in his graces as when God's mowing-machine has gone over him. His self confidence, or his growing love of the world, or his sinful ambitions needed the scythe. Even Paul himself would not have grown up so thick and even, and strong from the roots, if he had not been mowed pretty often. The best trees in the orchard need trimming.

## CCCV.

In one of the German picture galleries is a painting called "Cloud-land." It hangs at the end of a long gallery, and at first sight it looks like a huge, repulsive daub of confused color, without form or comeliness. As you walk towards it the picture begins to take shape. It proves to be a mass of exquisite little cherub faces, like those at the head of the canvas in Raphael's "Madonna San Sisto." If you come close to the picture, you see only an innumerable company of little angels and cherubim! How often the soul that is frightened by trial sees nothing but a confused and repulsive mass of

broken expectations and crushed hopes! But if that soul; instead of fleeing away into unbelief and despair, would only draw up near to God, it would soon discover that the cloud was full of angels of mercy. In one cherub face it would see, "Whom I love, I chasten." Another angel would say, "All things work together for good to them that love God." In still another sweet face the heavenly words are coming forth, "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. Where I am there shall ye be also."

## CCCVI.

Patience is a beautiful trait, but it is not worn oftenest by those who walk on life's sunny side in silver slippers. It is the product of dark nights of tempest, and of those days of adversity whose high noon is but a midnight. For "*The trial of your faith worketh patience.*"

## CCCVII.

Prosperity brings out only a few of a man's good graces. . . . When a favorable wind strikes a vessel "right aft" it only fills a portion of the sails; when it veers round and strikes it "on the beam," then every inch of canvas is reached. If the Lord is so shifting the winds that

they reach thy undeveloped graces of humility, and faith, and patience, and unselfish love, do not be alarmed. He does not mean to swamp thee, or send thee on a lee shore; he only intends to bring thee into a "better trim," and give thee a more abundant entrance into the desired haven.

## CCCVIII.

In a musical instrument there are some keys that must be touched in order to evoke its fullest melodies; God is a wonderful organist, who knows just what heart-chord to strike.

## CCCIX.

The school of suffering graduates rare scholars. To the disciples in that school it is often given to "know the love of Jesus which passeth knowledge." Suffering Christian! be not in haste to quit thy Master's school; thou art fitting for the *High School* of Heaven. Push not away peevishly thy cup of sorrow; for the sparkling diamond of Christ's love for thee is in the draught he gives thee to drink.

## CCCX.

God never deceives his children. If we but keep fast hold to the Guiding Hand, we shall find

the road to be not one step longer or harder than is best for us. God has piloted every saint through this very road and up these very hills of difficulty. It will be better further on. Every chastening of a believer's soul lies at the end of a painful ordeal. Every success worth the having lies at the end of brave, protracted toil. Twenty years of storm must be battled through by Wilberforce and Clarkson before Negro Emancipation is enacted by the British Parliament. At evening-time the sky was crimsoned with the *flush of victory*.

## CCCXI.

Very few even of Christ's *choice ones* can travel life's railway with perfect safety at forty miles an hour. The heated axle is very apt to snap, or else the engine flies the track of conformity to God and goes off the embankment.

## CCCXII.

If we turn up a certain verse in the fourteenth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel, we shall find a truth hidden under a historical incident. The incident is on this wise : Absalom, the artful aspirant to his father's throne, wishes to have an interview with Joab, the field marshall of David's army. He sends for Joab to come to him, but Joab refuses. Finding that the obstinate old sol-

dier pays no heed to his urgent request, he practised a stratagem.

“See! Joab’s field is next to mine, and he hath barley there. Go and set it on fire! And Absalom’s servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose and came to Absalom.”

Now, just as the shrewd young prince dealt with Joab in order to bring him unto him, so God employs a regimen of discipline very often in order to bring wayward hearts to himself. . . . There was a time when our nation had shamefully backslidden from the fundamental principles of our Declaration of Independence. The value of cotton crops outweighed the value of liberty. The righteous God saw that we cared more for the perpetuity of our Union and our prosperity than we did for the rights of four millions of his children. But when the first flash of a national conflagration lighted up the Southern sky, then millions of af-frighted voices began to cry out —

“Why is our magnificent Union given to the flames? We could sleep while God’s law of right was trampled under foot; but when the national peace and power and pride were trodden down by the same remorseless heel, we awoke, as a man awakes at the cry of “fire” under his own roof-tree.

God saw what we prized most, and he touched that. It is better to lose the barley than to lose the blessing.



## CCCXIII.

A vivid emotion of love and gratitude is very apt to break out into speech, either in the form of a public testimony for Christ, or in the voice of song. I have known a prayer-meeting, at a time of awakening, to become like an aviary, for God had put a new song into scores of mouths.

## CCCXIV.

Joy is simply love looking at its treasures. A Christian's joy is in clasping Christ and looking forward to the hour when he shall see him as he is. Earth is the believer's ante-chamber to Heaven.

## CCCXV.

Kind words are the oil that lubricates every-day intercourse. They cost little. A phrase of common comfort, "that by daily use hath almost lost its sense, will fall upon the saddened heart like choicest music."

## CCCXVI.

Raptures are not always vouchsafed even to the most genuine converts. But you ought to feel a solid satisfaction in following Christ. A healthy man will enjoy a ripe peach, or a luscious bunch of

grapes. There must be something lacking in any one's experience who professes to be feeding on Christ, and doing Christ's will, and yet finds no delight in it. How can we love Jesus, and not know the fact, or experience no joy in the emotion?

### CCCXVII.

Palestine was a musical aviary in the spring ; it abounded with sparrows, goldfinches, larks and song-thrushes. In the Song of Solomon this annual outbreak of bird-melody is made a beautiful type of the return of Christ to his bride the Church. When Jesus comes into the soul, the winter of unbelief is ended, the spices of spiritual joy begin to "flow out," the new hope begins to blossom, and a new song is put into the heart, even of praise unto our God.

### CCCXVIII.

When Latimer was on trial for heresy, he heard the scratch of a pen behind the tapestry. In a moment he bethought himself that every word he spoke was *taken down*, and he says that he was very careful what words he uttered. Behind the veil that hides eternity is a record-book, in which our every syllable is taken down. Even the most trivial are not forgotten, for the Lord Jesus tells us

that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment!" If our words have an eternity of existence, if good words have so potent an influence to save, if idle, or profane, or poisonous speech work such perennial mischief, how needful is the perpetual utterance of the prayer, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ; keep the door of my lips."

## CCCXIX.

What a powerful picture of a soul without God is that drawn in the prophecy of Isaiah, which describes it as a "troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." This is the work of memory. Let the wrong-doer try to hide his sins as carefully or to bury them as deeply as he knows how, memory will throw them to the surface as troubled waters heave up what has been flung into their depths. When a vessel had sunk in Lake Erie, an effort was made to raise the bodies of the drowned passengers by firing heavy cannon over the spot ; and the jar brought them up. So the tremendous artillery of God's justice—manned by those two gunners Memory and Conscience—brings up to our eyes the hideous sins which we thought were buried forever. Conscience utters two great voices. One of them declares "Great peace have they who love God's law ; in keeping his commandments is great reward." The other voice is, "There

is no peace to the wicked ; they are like the troubled sea which cannot rest ; the wages of sin is death." Just in proportion as we hear and *heed* these voices, conscience becomes our sweetest comforter, or our most terrible tormentor.

## CCCXX.

A sanctified memory is the soul's storeroom. We pity the man with whom this is but an empty garret or a confused lumber-room, heaped up with accumulated things, so hopelessly mingled that its owner can never lay hands on what he needs at the moment. With a devout believer the memory is a cabinet of curiosities of God's love. In no apartment does Jesus abide oftener than in this ; here the alabaster-box of gratitude is broken, and the room is filled with the sweet odor of the ointment.

## CCCXXI.

Constant longings and inquisitive yearnings arise in many minds to *know* more about Heaven. For example, a bereaved mother writes to me this week : " Do you imagine that the passage in Zachariah which describes the boys and girls playing in the streets of Jerusalem, is intended to be any description of the Celestial City ? " Her motherly heart, in its achings, laid hold of an olden prophecy, and tried to catch a glimpse through it of the

darling boy whose playthings now lie idle on her nursery floor. Well, we will venture to tell her that if she reaches Heaven, the first person she will want to see will not be even that beloved boy. The walls of sapphire, or the streets like unto pure gold, or the innumerable company of the shining ones, will not be the chief attraction. The glory of Heaven will be to *see Jesus*. If it were possible to weep there, we shall shed tears of joy at the first view of Him whose agonies secured for us that magnificent inheritance. We shall be "*glad* because we see our Lord." How overflowing, too, will be our gratitude that he has *kept* for us all the treasures we committed to his hands!

## CCCXXII.

Last year I sat, at eventide, on the battlements of the castellated convent of Mar Saba, and looked down into the deep gorge of the Kidron where the jackals have their lairs, and across the chasm where the Bedouins were prowling. All night I laid secure in the strong fortress while the jackals howled and the Bedouins prowled. So may every child of God who has lodged himself in the stronghold of the Divine promise rest securely, and let the Devil's jackals howl as loudly as they like, or the Adversary lie in wait outside the solid gateway. This is the promise that He hath promised to every true believer, even *eternal life*. Cleave to

that. As long as we trust God in Christ and attest our faith by our conduct, we may roll the responsibility of our salvation over on God himself. But will this life outlast the grave? Will it reach across that great mysterious chasm that separates us from the unseen world? Will it be *eternal*? These are the questions which sometimes torment the survivors when they have gone down to the shore of the unbridged river, and watched a beloved child or husband or wife disappear slowly from their view. Can I feel *sure* that there is a Heaven for that loved one to land in? Ah, this is the question which weeping affection raises in ten thousand cases; and nobody comes back from that other world to answer it. What is more—nobody ever will come back to bring a single syllable of assurance. The boats on that sombre stream all head in one direction; there are no “return trips.”

Suppose that one should come back and tell us that he had actually found a Heaven, and entered it, and participated in its splendors and joys. If we believed the statement it would be on a single *human* authority. But if we would believe the witness of a man, is not the witness of the Almighty God infinitely greater? If we are only to feel sure of Heaven on the testimony of somebody returning to each one of us, then would we consent to exercise a faith that glorifies a worm of the dust and dishonor the God of the universe. I

would rather trust a single line of divine promise than a myriad of human assertions.

## CCCXXIII.

Whatever changes may be produced by death, personal identity will not be altered by one jot or tittle. The sinner who sins here, will be the same sinner who will be punished in the world of woe. The believer who is welcomed with "Come, thou blessed of my Father!" will be the same person who on earth had done the Father's bidding. Without the preservation of perfect identity the whole idea of a future retribution of rewards and punishments would be an absurd impossibility.

## CCCXXIV.

A grand sight is an old weather-beaten and battle-bruised ship—like *Old Ironsides* or Lord Nelson's *Victory*—which has ended its cruise and swung its anchors at the bow. So will Christ's fleet of triumphant souls lie in the desired haven upon the sea of crystal, and in the silver light of Heaven's morning!

## CCCXXV.

The future is an unmapped territory; every step is literally a step in the dark. The future is a

"seven-sealed book," and no man can unloose the seals thereof. We discover its contents only as God unlooses the seals and turns over leaf by leaf, one at a time. Selfishness often aches to peep into the sealed pages. But Faith whispers: "No, no; *trust* God." Every joy that is lying in wait for me at some new turn of the road breaks on me as a sweet surprise. The mercies, like transporting views in mountain travels, are more bewitching that they were not spoiled by anticipations. God does not let us "discount" his mercies in advance.

### CCCXXVI.

A thousand things, speculative and poetical, have been written in regard to the Christian's future home. The Bible says just enough to rouse our curiosity and to stimulate speculation, but not enough to spoil the sublime mystery which overhangs it like a cloud of glory. . . . A distinctly bounded place of abode it must be, or else John's view of it from Patmos was an idle phantasm. . . . Why surrender the view of a literal home of the redeemed such as John has described to us? Why volatilize it all away into the thin vapor of metaphor? If John did not see what he described, then he saw nothing at all; and if he saw nothing real, then the closing visions of the Apocalypse are a splendid fog-bank. . . . That our heavenly home will satisfy our fullest



social longings, we cannot doubt. The recognition of friends cannot possibly be a question of doubt. No barriers of caste can separate those who are children of the one Father and dwelling in the same household. When Cineas, the ambassador of Pyrrhus, came back from his visit to Rome in the days of her glory, he reported to his sovereign that he had seen a "commonwealth of kings." So will it be in Heaven, where every heir of redeeming grace will be as a king and priest unto God, and a divine adoption shall make every one a member of the royal family. . . . .

Happy is that child of Jesus who is always listening for the footfall this side of the golden gate, and for the voice of invitation to hurry home. . . . . There is a delightful permanence in that word, "*Forever* with the Lord."

### CCCXXVII.

There is something beautifully suggestive in the many-sidedness of Heaven, with gates of entrance from every point of the compass. It emphasizes the catholicity of God's house, into which all the redeemed shall enter, from all parts of the globe, and with their varying theological and denominational opinions. All shall come in through Christ Jesus, and yet through many gateways. Thank God, no bigot shall be able to bar out one soul that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb!

## CCCXXVIII.

The glory of Heaven will be in seeing Jesus. "A little while and ye shall see Me, because I go unto my Father. Where I am ye shall be also." When we return home after a long absence, it is not the house or the furniture or fireside that awaken our joy. It is meeting the loved ones. If they have gone, every forsaken room or empty chair is an agony. So in our Father's house, it will not be the pearl gate or the streets of gold that will make us happy. But oh! how transcendently glad will we be when we see our *Lord*! If we ever weep in Heaven it will be tears of joy at meeting Jesus. Perhaps in that "upper room" also he may show unto us his hands and his side, and we may then cry out as did happy Thomas:

"My Lord, and my God!"

## CCCXXIX.

Abraham Lincoln lived to enter Richmond amid the acclamations of the liberated slave; he lived until Sumter's flag rose again like Bethlehem's star in the Southern sky; and then with the martyr's crown upon his brow, and with four millions of broken fetters in his hand, he went up to meet his God. In a moment his life crystallized into the pure white flame that belongs only to the mar-

tyr for truth and liberty. Terrible as seemed to us the method of his death, it was, after all, the most fitting and glorious. In God's sight Lincoln was no more precious than the humblest drummer-boy who bled away his young life on the sod of Gettysburg or Chattanooga. He had called on two hundred thousand heroes to lay down their lives for their country ; and now he has gone to make his own grave beside them.

So sleep the brave who sink to rest  
By all their country's wishes blest.

When that grave on yonder prairie shall finally yield up its dead, glorious will be his resurrection. Methinks I behold the spirit of the great liberator in that judgment scene, before the assembled hosts of Heaven. Around him are the tens of thousands from whom he struck off the chain. Methinks I hear their grateful voices exclaim : " We were an hungered, and thou gavest us the bread of freedom ; we were thirsty for liberty, and thou gavest us drink ; we were strangers in the land of our birth, and thou didst take us in ; we were sick with two centuries of sorrow, and thou didst visit us ; we were in the prison-house of bondage, and thou camest to us." And the King shall say unto him, " Inasmuch as thou didst it to the least of these my brethren, then thou hast done it unto me. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord."

## CCCXXX.

But few Americans ever saw Thomas Carlyle, for he led a very secluded and laborious life, in his little brick house at Chelsea, in the Southwestern London, and he never kept open doors. He had few intimate friends, and sometimes smoked a pipe with Tennyson, and discoursed in a strain of high poetry and rollicking fun beyond anything in the *Noctes Ambrosianae*. Emerson and Dean Stanley were also welcome guests.

During my college boy visit to England, in 1842, I ventured to call on Mr. Carlyle. Thirty years afterwards, in June, 1872, I felt a irrepressible desire to see the grand old man once more; and I accordingly addressed him a note, requesting the favor of a few minutes' interview. His reply was perhaps the briefest letter ever written. It was simply — "3 P. M. T. C." He explained to me afterward that his hand had become so tremulous that he seldom touched a pen.

The Rev. Newman Hall asked the privilege of accompanying me, for like most Londoners, he had never put his eye on the recluse philosopher. We found the same old brick dwelling, Number 5, Cheyne Row, without the slightest change, outside or in. But during those thirty years, the kind good wife whom I had met in 1842 had departed, and a sad change had come over the once hale, stalwart man. After we had waited some time, a

feeble, stooping figure, attired in a long blue flannel gown, moved slowly into the room. His gray hair was unkempt, his blue eye was still keen and piercing, and a bright hectic spot of red appeared in each of his hollow cheeks. His hands were tremulous, and his voice deep and husky. After a few personal inquiries, the old man launched out into a most extraordinary and characteristic harangue on the wretched degeneracy of these evil days. The prophet Jeremiah was cheerfulness itself in comparison. Much of his extraordinary language was like the eruption of Vesuvius; but the laugh he occasionally gave showed that he was "mandating" about as much for his own amusement as for ours. He looked up at the portrait of Oliver Cromwell behind him, and exclaimed with great vehemence, "I have gone doon to the verra bottom of Oliver's speeches, and naething in Demosthenes, or in any ither wull compare in Cromwell in the piercing into the veritable core 'o the fact."

We led him to speak of the labor question, and the condition of the working classes. He said the turmoil about labor was only a "lazy trick o' both master and mon, to do joost as little honest work and get joost as much for it as they possibly can. That's the lawbor question." It did my heart good as a teetotaler to hear his scathing denunciation of the drinking usages. He was fierce in his wrath against the "horrible and detestable damnation of whiskey and ivery kind 'o strong drink." In this

strain the thin, weird-looking old iconoclast went on for an hour. We enjoyed it as a postscript to *Sartor Resartus* or the *Latter Day Pamphlets*, and stared and laughed accordingly. Wonderful old man!

For fifty years this grand piece of tough, gnarled, honest Scotch timber has been conspicuous. The intimate friend of Edward Irving, the compeer of Sir Walter Scott, the associate of Macaulay and Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review*, lived to be in literature what Wellington was among British captains. Nothing that ever came from Carlyle's pen will live longer than his eulogy of Burns, which first appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*. He wrote it, and his *Life of Schiller*, before he had transformed a rich and graceful English into his indescribable Carlylese. Nothing like it has ever been fashioned on the earth or in the waters under the earth. He was the last of the giants in British Literature. He will outlive many an author who slumbers in "the great Abbey."

Thomas Carlyle was nurtured on the strong meat of the Westminster catechism. The fogs of German mysticism blew away as he drew towards the end of his pilgrimage. Some stout, ringing words he uttered in defence of the faith once committed to the saints. Mayhap by this time he has risen to that clearer clime where faith is swallowed up in sight. For one I owe him grateful thanks for many stimulating thoughts, and shall always be

glad that I grasped the strong hand of Thomas Carlyle.

## CCCXXXI.

A dry, withered flower lies by me, which I gathered on a sweet July morning, beside the doorway of Wordsworth's cottage on Rydal Mount. That cottage is now a lonely spot. The venerable interpreter of nature no longer leans on his staff beneath that doorway. Within a stone's throw of that "Mount" is a plain tomb, on which more than one moistened eye has read the name of William Wordsworth. . . . I had come up from Ambleside to spend an hour with him, as he always gave a hearty welcome to the few Americans who wandered in to his secluded home. The cottage was just what I expected in appearance, but not its illustrious occupant. Instead of a grave, pensive man, in scholastic black, I found a most affable, smiling, lovable old man, dressed in a well-worn coat of *blue* (with metal buttons), and checked breeches, with a broad-brimmed white hat lying by his side. He looked like a substantial farmer just come in for his "nooning"; and his greeting had a broad heartiness in it that took me all aback. His face was long and thin; his complexion highly florid; his hair fell upon his shoulders, and over his half-closed eyes he wore a pair of large green spectacles. . . . He

entered at once into a genial and most familiar conversation, talked of America with great enthusiasm, particularly of his friend Washington Irving, and of Mrs. Sigourney, who had once paid him a visit.

For years he had hoped to see our country for himself, but the duties of a small office which he held, and on which he was partially dependent, had prevented the undertaking. His library was not large. Had Wordsworth been a richer man he would hardly have been a great collector of books. When a visitor once said to his servant, "Is this your master's study?" "No, sir," replied the man; "my master's study is *out of doors*." I was not surprised, therefore, to hear presently from the old poet an invitation to walk out into his grounds, and see the neighboring views. As we moved about through the well-trimmed walks, he talked on with the most lively enthusiasm. "Yonder is Rydal Water." And there it lay, a mere shellful of water, environed round by bold, towering hills. In front, over the steeple of the parish church, was *Grasmere*, the lake along whose beach Coleridge was wont to wander, and beside which he composed the *Ancient Mariner*." Beyond was Helvellyn, the mountain king, with his retinue of a hundred hills, and at his feet lay Robert Southey. Of all these scenes, and the great men who had haunted them during years gone by, the aged man talked on until we reached again his cottage door.



He then bade me farewell, with a parting "God bless you!" I pulled this little flower (then fresh and bright), and turned slowly away from Rydal Mount.

## CCCXXXII.

The crowd in the Abbey was prodigious. Many of the guests climbed on the monuments, to witness the ceremonies. After long and patient waiting, we heard the funeral anthem sounding through the nave, and presently the procession entered. It contained the foremost living men of England. The heir to the throne marched in and occupied the pew of his old tutor, who was lying in the coffin before him. Upon the coffin were wreaths of "immortelles," and white flowers from the Westminster schoolboys, and a handful of Chinese roses from the Queen herself. The venerable Archbishop of Canterbury was in line, Lord Shaftesbury, and Lord Houghton, and Tyn-dall, and Browning, and the Bishop of Peterborough. The coffin was borne by the same hands that had carried the Dean's beloved wife, Lady Augusta, to her burial, in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. It was set down before the pulpit in which the Dean had stood a few days before. By the foot of the coffin, the most conspicuous figure was William E. Gladstone.

The funeral music to-day was solemn and sub-

lime. Its rich strains swelled and rolled among the lofty arches with prodigious grandeur. Then the deep tones of the *Dead March* were heard, and the procession formed again. The body of Arthur Stanley was taken up and tenderly carried over those historic stones which he himself had trodden so often and so long. He was to be laid among the great, in his death. With slow and measured tread they bore him past the tomb of Dryden. Old Spenser, and Ben Jonson, and the author of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, were sleeping close by. A little further on, they passed the tomb of Edward the Confessor. The heir to the Confessor's throne was in the procession, and the descendants too of many a great warrior who lay in silent stone effigy on those monuments. Gradually the line passed on and on among the columns, until it entered the door of Henry the Seventh's Chapel and disappeared from my view.

### CCCXXXIII.

Carlton House Terrace is one of the historic spots in London. It is a long, stately row of mansions flanking St. James Park. At the foot of broad Waterloo Place stands the lofty column to the Duke of York. As he died heavily in debt, the wags say "The Duke was put up on top of the column to get him out of the reach of his credi-

tors." In the second or third house from the monument resides Britain's ruler, the Premier Gladstone. Technically, the ruler of the realm dwells in Windsor Palace. But Major Jack Downing tells us that when General Jackson — on his visit to Downingville — got tired of shaking hands with the crowd, he (the Major) hid behind him, and poking his arm under old Hickory's shoulder, he "shuck hands *for* the Ginerál." So the hand of royalty in England is really the hand of William E. Gladstone slipped under the regal robes. I had the honor of two very delightful interviews with the Premier last summer. As the "Alabama question" was just at its most exciting point, Mr. Gladstone was quite ready to converse freely with any American who was supposed to be familiar with the state of public sentiment on this side of the water. He very kindly invited me to visit him. He received me with cordial freedom, and in the half-hour's chat he opened his mind to me with that transparent sincerity which belongs to the character of a Christian statesman. As I rose to leave, saying to him, "Your time belongs to the British Empire and not to an American traveller," he very cordially said, "Come and breakfast with me on Thursday." Breakfast is the familiar meal in English home-life, as "tea-drinking" is with us. I went at ten o'clock on a June morning, and found the Premier standing out on his rear balcony, overlooking cool, verdant St. James Park.

Mr. Gladstone is in excellent preservation; his walk is alert, and his broad shoulders have never stooped under the load of official responsibilities. One secret of his vigorous health is that he is a capital sleeper. "I never," said he to me, "allow the cares of State to get inside of my bed-chamber door." He says that he does not remember that he was ever kept awake for half an hour by anxiety but once. And that was at the country-seat of his brother-in-law, Lord Lytteton, where he had been chopping down a tree just at twilight. He did not quite finish the job, and the fear that the tree might blow down before morning worried him out of a little sleep. I am afraid that President Lincoln knew but little of such quiet slumbers during his stormy administration.

At the breakfast-table of Mr. Gladstone I met the venerable Dean Ramsay, of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Newman Hall, who is on quite intimate terms of friendship with the Premier. Mrs. Gladstone—who was the daughter of a substantial country gentleman, and with whom Mr. Gladstone fell in love in his student days—is a warm-hearted lady, whose beauty of character and manners surpass her beauty of person. She is an untiring worker in several schemes of active philanthropy. A son was at the table, and a noble-looking daughter. Another son is in the Church of England pulpit. And what a charming hour of chat was that at the Prime Minister's breakfast! A package of private

despatches from the Geneva Arbitrators was quietly laid aside unopened until the coffee and toast and strawberries were disposed of. The Presidential campaign in America seemed to interest Mr. Gladstone deeply, and he inquired, "Have you read Mr. Sumner's speech against the President? It is an extraordinary speech. If his charges are unjust, they ought never to have been made. If they are just, it seems to me that impeachment is inevitable. It would be thought so here. We do not quite understand our freedom of Congressional criticisms."

But politics were soon ruled out for a playful discussion of American humor, especially of the negro type. Mr. Gladstone enjoyed hugely some stories of plantation preaching, and said afterwards that he had not laughed so heartily in many a day. Negro wit (like negro music) is so indigenous to our soil that it is fresher to foreign ears than to our own. As the hour came for a morning session of Parliament, we withdrew. Mr. Gladstone's last words to me were, "I cannot tell what Providence may order, but *no power on earth* can hinder the peaceful settlement of our controversy with your country, and the complete triumph of the treaty." He was a true prophet. And let us rejoice that during all that long controversy, the sagacious brain, and the noble Christian heart of William E. Gladstone, guided the diplomacy of the British Empire.

## CCCXXXIV.

Switzerland is the land for sublimity; the Tyrol for a beauty that bewitches, but seldom overawes.

Nature has done wonders for the English landscapes, and art has wrought in harmony. Here an old Gothic church lifts its tower amid the oaks; there an Elizabethan mansion heads an ascending lawn; there a graceful bridge of stone arches some clear silvery Avon, or Dee, or Trent; even if a cottage be two centuries old it wears its thatched crown gracefully. To this perfection of rural loveliness our mother-country has arrived after twenty generations have expended their utmost toil, and taste, and skill.

## CCCXXXV.

I expected to find Gethsemane desolate and neglected. Instead of that I found it in beautiful order, with an elegant inner iron railing, and laid out in tasteful flower-beds. Alongside of the ancient olive-trees — many hundreds of years old — grow a profusion of roses, carnations, marigolds, heliotropes, and many varieties of fragrant plants. This adorning of the scene of my blessed Saviour's agony was grateful to me. Why not? Did he not bear the grief that we might taste the sweetness of the blessing of redemption? I rejoiced to see these fragrant tributes blooming so thick,

and rich, and beautiful, as tokens of the heavenly hopes that have sprung up from Gethsemane's soil once steeped in tears.

## CCCXXXVI.

When Pericles had seen the last frieze placed on the Parthenon, and the last exquisite moulding carved around the doorway of the Erectheum, he had seen the consummate perfection of all that man can accomplish in the horizontal styles of architecture. Since that time the world has seen the perpendicular in its perfection in many a Gothic cathedral, but not one new idea has been added to the Doric and the Ionic in three and twenty centuries. That marvellous sense of beauty which the Greeks of that age possessed, wrought itself out in everything it touched.

All the finest Ionic structure in the world for the last two thousand years have been only the copies of what those Greek wonder-workers wrought on that end of that little Erectheum with a single decade. They struck perfection at once, and all subsequent generations have done nothing but try to imitate their handiwork.

## CCCXXXVII.

Last Tuesday I climbed Mount Pentelicus, and from its summit looked right down on the famous

battle-field of Marathon. It is as smooth as a race-course and so small that Miltiades with his ten thousand Athenians could cover the whole front against ten times as many Persians. On my way I rode through groves of classic olive and pine, and green vineyards. It seemed as if I might meet Sophocles going out to meditate a new tragedy, or Anacreon to compose a new song for the vine-dressers. The air was instinct with the memories and glories of the past. This little land of Attica once ruled the world with its genius. On the ruins of that wonderful commonwealth — after long, dark centuries of ignorance and obscurity — a new Athens and a new Greece have sprung up. No land on the continent of Europe has a stronger claim on our hearts, or excites a more thrilling hope for its future than the land in which Pericles builded, and Plato thought, and Phidias carved, and Paul proclaimed the Gospel of eternal life.

### CCCXXXVIII.

It will always remain an enigma that within a single century Grecian art and philosophy should have flowed out in the most consummate of their productions of genius and then straightway ceased to bloom again! All the greatest achievements of Athincan brains were wrought between the battles of Marathon and Cheronea, and that space does not cover more than the lives of a



father and son, provided that they both lived seventy years. The only answer to this problem is that it seems to be God's plan to illuminate this world not by single stars, but by constellations.

## CCCXXXIX.

The melancholy air of decay which lingers about the deserted palaces of what was once the splendid Queen of the Adriatic, always saddens me in Venice. When the novelty of paddling in a gondola through the watery ways and close by the doorsteps of old musty mansions is over, then the city becomes just a trifle monotonous. The first day is a delight and a marvel; the treasures of the Doge's palace and of ancient St. Mark are unsurpassed; after that Venice has no picturesque scenes like Cairo, and no sublime memories to feed on like Jerusalem.

## CCCXL.

As I passed through the very heart of England, on my way from Hull, I could but think how rich had been the mental and spiritual harvests gathered from those old historic fields! Nearly every town has placed books in our libraries, or in some way enriched our memories. When I read the name of "Kettering" on the station-sign, I thought of old Andrew Fuller's eight volumes of solid theology. Northampton suggested Doddridge and his *Rise*

*and Progress.* At Bedford I was in the birthplace of both John Howard and the "Pilgrim" of John Bunyan. Not far away were the green fields where Cowper mused over the "Task" and "Olney Hymns." Robert Hall, Lord Macaulay, Marvell, and Kirke White had all been born and reared in the region through which we ran ; and from amid the smoke of Sheffield had come forth the musical notes of Elliott and Montgomery. All these memories added new charms to the landscape that smiled under the summer sun.

### CCCXLI.

The American Republic is making a prodigious impression upon the older continents. It is not merely the coming nation ; *it has come !* . . . . It is not a matter for empty boasting, but it is a matter of momentous responsibility to be an American citizen and to bear even the humblest part in shaping its moral destiny.

### CCCXLII.

Yesterday was a day of enchantment. We took a walk about Zion ; we gazed over at the mountains of Moab ; we caught our first view of sacred Gethsemane. We stood by "Robinson's Arch," and strolled among the ruined walls of the old rallying place of the Knights Templars. We threaded the

narrow streets and studied the picturesque crowds that reproduced the days of Solomon and the days of Godfrey of Bouillon. In one respect Jerusalem has suffered great injustice. Most tourists describe it as surrounded by wild, bleak desolation. I expected to see only mountains of glaring white limestone. But these travellers came at the wrong season of the year. April is the summer of Palestine; although the air yesterday was delightfully cool. As I stood on Mount Zion, the Hill of Evil Counsel and the mountains toward Bethlehem were clothed with verdure. The gardens under Moriah were bright with flowers. Olivet was green, except for the white Jewish tombs on its southern end. Scarlet poppies flamed among the stones of the ancient walls. When we went out of the Damascus gate, and stood on the low hill which many regard as the true site of Calvary, the whole country towards Samaria was luxuriant with waving barley and with olive-orchards.

So must it have looked when the blessed Master led his disciples among those very fields, and went towards Galilee. So must the land have smiled when over all its terraced hills and among its rich valleys, it supported a population as teeming as the population of Egypt to-day. I thank God I have seen his goodly land of Canaan, not dreary and desolate as I feared, but arrayed in the bright robes of summer, and with these everlasting hills wearing a verdant crown of beauty.

## CCCXLIII.

It is a striking coincidence that the finest hymns in the English language should have been composed in those southern counties that stretch along the Channel. Toplady wrote the *Rock of Ages*, and Charlotte Elliot her hymn, *Just as I am*, in Devonshire. Henry Lyte, the author of *Abide with Me*, lived in the same county. Charles Wesley gave birth to *Jesus, Lover of my Soul*, and Perronet to the hymn, *All hail the power of Jesus, Name*, in that poetic belt of the south of England. Isaac Watts penned his first hymn at Southampton, opposite to the Isle of Wight.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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**THE LORD'S PURSEBEARERS.** By Hesba Stretton. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.25. The name of Hesba Stretton is too well known in English literature to render it necessary to make special commendation of any work from her pen. No writer of religious fiction stands higher in England, and there is not a Sunday-school library where some one of her volumes may not be found. She has the faculty of entertaining and instructing at the same time. The present publishers have made special arrangements with her for the production in this country of her latest work, and the probabilities are that all her future books will bear their imprint. In *The Lord's Pursebearers* the author draws a terrible picture of life among the vicious poor in London streets, and shows by what shifts the professional beggars and thieves of the great Babylon manage to live and thrive on the misplaced charity of the pitying well-to-do population. She arouses a strong feeling of sympathy for the children who are bred in the haunts of vice, and who are instructed in crime before they are old enough to know the meaning of the word. The story is one of intense interest, and the characters, especially those of old Isaac Chippendell, his granddaughter Joan, and little Lucky, are forcibly drawn. One can hardly believe that such places exist or that such deeds are perpetrated as are here described, but one who is familiar with London and its streets knows that they are no exaggerations. The volume is illustrated.

**THE AFTERGLOW OF EUROPEAN TRAVEL.** By Adelaide L. Harrington. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. This pleasant record of experiences abroad will delight those who have gone over the same ground, as well as those who have never strayed beyond the bounds of their own country. It is not a connected story of travel, but consists of reminiscences and descriptions of various spots and objects which made the deepest and most lasting impression upon the writer.

## OUR BOOK TABLE.

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**POOR PAPA.** By Mary W. Porter. Illustrated. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Paper covers, 50 cents. Of all the lately published books in which children bear a principal part, one of the most natural and charming is *Poor Papa*. It breathes the very spirit of childhood, and one is inclined to believe that the author must have drawn her characters from living models. Few writers have the faculty of describing children as they are, and many of the so-called "juvenile" books published are dreary failures simply because their writers have no sympathy with their subjects. The children whom Miss Porter describes are genuine children and not make-believe. They have all the indescribable ways and peculiarities that make little people oftentimes riddles to their elders. Their journey abroad with "Poor Papa," who comes all the way over the ocean for them, their adventures, their quaint observations on what they see and hear, their thorough enjoyment of everything, the comical surprises they are continually giving those around them, are delightfully set forth, and will be as fascinating reading for the older as for the younger ones.

"Poor Papa" is sure to be a favorite. It is a graphic story of the perplexities of a father, left a widower, to care for two children. The father is an artist, absorbed in painting, and having no knowledge of child-nature; while his two children, loving and true, are like young colts, with irrepressible life and spirits, and perpetually in trouble. They have many amusing adventures in Italy, from their rollicking love of freedom and fun, and barely escape with life from a governess, whose martinet habits transform her into an ogre, delighting in torture. But the troubles of papa and children find a happy solution in the advent of a new mamma, the sister of a brother artist, whose fine womanly instincts have helped the children already over many a hard place. Summer travellers will have many a hearty laugh over the volume, and enjoy equally the humor of the children and the perplexities of "Papa."



## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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**ORIGINALITY.** By Elias Nason. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$.50. Mr. Nason has here made a reply to Wendell Phillips' "Lost Arts," which is well worth reading for its point and suggestiveness. He endeavors to show the meaning of the word, and what important results have come from the originating powers of a few bright men since the beginning of civilization. He takes up, one by one, the points made by Mr. Phillips in his famous lecture, and shows on what slight grounds they rest, and of how little weight they really are when examined and analyzed. Mr. Nason does not believe that any of the useful arts have been lost. The ancients had few to lose. They made glass, but they did not know how to use it. They could embalm dead bodies; but of what use were embalmed dead bodies? They had some knowledge of mathematics, but a school-boy's arithmetic to-day contains more mathematical knowledge than has come out of all the exhumed cities of the Orient. There were more marvels of art displayed at the Centennial exhibition than in the ancient world for twenty centuries. Mr. Nason insists that the æsthetical productions of the ancients have been vastly over-estimated. The periods of Demosthenes," he says, "yield in Titanic force to the double-compact sentences of Daniel Webster. Mr. Phillips himself has sometimes spoken more eloquently than Cicero. Homer never rises to the sublimity of John Milton." The world grows wiser and better. Age by age, it has been developing its resources and adding pearl to pearl to the diadem of its wisdom; sometimes slower, sometimes quicker, but always upward and onward. Mr. Nason writes in a fresh and sparkling style, and the thousands who have listened with rapt attention to Mr. Phillips' eloquent presentation of his side of the question will find equal pleasure and greater profit in reading this charming essay, which is equally eloquent and unquestionably sounder in its conclusions.

**THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CHARLES DICKENS.** By Phebe A. Hanaford. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. A life of Dickens, written by a popular author and upon a new plan, will be sure to meet with favor at the hands of the public. Mrs. Hanaford has not attempted to write a critical and original analysis of the great author from her own point of view, but, while sketching the main incidents of his life, has quoted liberally from his works to illustrate his genius, and from the correspondence and writings of his personal friends to show the estimation in which he was held by them as a man, a philanthropist and a Christian. The volume commends itself to every lover of Dickens, and deserves to be widely known and read.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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**YENSIE WALTON'S WOMANHOOD.** By Mrs. S. R. Graham Clark. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. Nine out of ten Sunday-school scholars have read *Yensie Walton*, one of the best and most interesting books that ever went into a Sunday-school library. The present volume introduces Yensie in a new home and under new conditions. She enters the family of a friend as an instructor of the younger members, and the narrative of her experiences will especially interest those who have to do with the moral and mental training of children. The author shows that all children are not made after the same pattern, and that one line of treatment is not of universal application. In one of her pupils, a boy of brilliant mental endowments, whose mind has become embittered because of a physical deformity, Yensie finds much to interest as well as to discourage her. She perseveres, however, and by studying his character carefully and working upon him from the right side, she gradually works a change in his disposition and brings his better qualities into active exercise. This is scarcely accomplished when a call from Valley Farm reaches her. Ever prompt to do duty's bidding, Yensie quits this happy home for the sterner requirements of her uncle's family, where she labored with unflinching interest and determination until that much-loved relative says his last good-by. It is then that the hitherto silenced wooer refuses to be longer quiet, and our heroine goes out from the old red farm-house to her wedded home, where as a wife and mother she makes duty paramount to pleasure, and every circumstance of life is met with that same fortitude characteristic of the Yensie Walton you so much admire. Besides the characters with which the reader is already familiar through the former work, others are introduced which are equally well drawn, and which serve to round out the story to completeness.

**THE MOTHER'S RECORD OF THE MENTAL, MORAL AND PHYSICAL LIFE OF HER CHILD.** Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Quarto, \$1.00. This work is valuable as it is unique. It is prepared by a Massachusetts woman, and though originally intended for her own benefit, has been published for the help of mothers everywhere. It is intended for a yearly chronicle of the child's growth and development, mental and physical, and will be an important aid to mothers who devote themselves to conscientious training of their little ones.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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**THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.** By Samuel Woodworth. Quarto Holiday edition. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. Of all the illustrated quarto presentation books yet issued, this is by all odds the most artistic and tasteful. The art of the designer, engraver and printer has in turn been exhausted to bring it as near perfection as possible. The drawings are from the skilful pencil of Miss Humphrey, and represent her best work. The engraving is by W. N. Closson, whose reputation in that line is equal to that of any other man in the country, and the printing is from new type on heavy paper with broad margins and gilt edges. In general style and binding the volume is uniform with *The Ninety and Nine, Drifting*, etc.

**THE STORY OF FOUR ACORNS.** By Alice B. Engle. Ill. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. Children who like fairy stories will find in this handsome volume a fountain of delight. The author possesses rare talent for interesting the young, and has here turned it to the best advantage. She has furnished a fascinating story, and has ingeniously woven into it bits of poetry and song from famous authors which will find easy entrance into the mind and create an appetite for more. The illustrations are among Miss Lathbury's best, and do their part toward making the volume attractive.

A capital idea is represented in the new book, *Historic Pictures*, suggested by the success of last season's volume, *Write Your Own Stories*. It consists of a collection of pictures illustrating places and events of historic interest, thirty in number, with three blank pages after each picture, which are to be utilized by the boys and girls in writing an account of the incidents which have made the various places famous. The publishers offer a series of cash prizes for competitors, the lists to remain open until July 1, 1882. The one who sends the best series of stories or historical descriptions of the pictures, will receive \$25.00; the author of the second best, \$15.00, and the third in point of excellence, \$10.00.

## BOOK NOTICES.

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Walks to Emmaus. By the late *Rev. Nehemiah Adams D. D.* Edited by his son, *Rev. William H. Adams.* First series. January-February. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. 12mo. pp 360. Price, \$1.00.

"This is the first volume of one of the largest and most promising homiletical works of the age. It will embrace two sermons for every Sabbath of an entire year. It is "a Christian year," yet not confined to the liturgy of any single denomination of Christians, but aiming to include within this compass one discourse on each topic of ordinary pastoral use, or the needs of the religious reader. It is adapted for the vacant pulpit, the sick room, and the private library.

It is agreed that no modern writer is better suited to all classes and capacities than Dr. Adams. Encomiums of his extensively circulated religious publications, "The Friends of Christ," "Christ a Friend," "Communion Sabbath," "Catharine," "At Eventide," &c., &c. Have justified this selection of more than a hundred and twenty sermons from the forty years' ministry of Rev. Dr. Adams, with the hope of their wide circulation among all religious denominations. Each of the six volumes now in preparation, to be issued every year or two, will be complete in itself although forming a part of this work designed as "one years discourses." For, one of the "fifth sabbath sermons" may be employed instead of one for a special occasion, for example "a new year's discourse." Every evangelical minister, theological student, and household should possess this crowning work of an eminent divine, and standard religious writer. The volume is tastefully printed and bound."



